

## AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

# Eureka Chapter

***The next meeting***  
***Thursday March 26th , 7:00 p.m.***  
*Woman's Club*  
*1531 J Street*  
*Eureka, California*

*Pre-Meeting No Host Dinner 5:15*  
***Sea Grill, 316 E 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

## March 2015

## Wild Weeds of Humboldt...Maddenii Sub Series Rhododendrons

***The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet on Thursday, March 26, 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.***

We hope you will enjoy Tim Walsh's program on the acquisition of the whole of Rhododendron sub-series maddenii for Humboldt Botanical Garden. The climate in Eureka is just possibly the best place anywhere to grow Rhododendron maddenii (...and a few other special plants as well!)

Timothy Patrick Walsh, born and raised a 4th generation Humboldt County, Eureka, Calif. native.

After attending University of Southern California Tim became a "sheep boy" on the Southern Humboldt ranch of his dad's long time friend. He thought his prospects of making a living as ranch-hand were poor so he became a real estate broker and finally settled in as a Stock Broker and Certified Financial Planner for more than 30 years.

Tim had an epiphany in Hendrick's Park Garden in the late '80s when he discovered *Rhododendron* 'Loderi King George'. He had no idea there were scented Rhododendrons! Before that he had grown up with many Eureka yards planted with *Rhododendron* 'Countess of Derby' which in Eureka were sold by Cottage Gardens Nursery in the early 1900s under the name R. 'Eureka (how is that for marketing?) As a little boy he would break off branches of the pink flowers from his aunt's house up the street and sell them to the neighbors for candy money (his dad was a dentist).

As the Rhodo-bug hit him hard, he spent many Saturdays at Westgate Garden Nursery with Catherine Weeks who passed away recently. One day she said that he needed to join the American Rhododendron Society to learn more about rhodos and meet other people who had the same affliction. Thus began a long relationship with the Eureka Chapter. He was awarded the ARS Silver Medal in 2008. Tim is a confirmed Rhodoholic.

In 1991 a Eureka lady, Irene Van Natter, called several of the garden/plant societies together to see if there were enough people interested in exploring creating a botanical garden in Humboldt County. Tim was on the founding board of directors for the newly formed Humboldt Botanical Gardens Foundation.

Tim and other Eureka Chapter ARS members have been instrumental in developing, selecting and caring for plants in the Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden at Humboldt Botanical Garden. Tim is a UC Extension Master Gardener, too.



*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.*



### **Bronze Medal awarded to June Walsh**

President Jerry Reynolds caught June Walsh unprepared and completely by surprise when he called her to the front of the February 26th meeting to receive the Eureka Chapter's Bronze Medal. He read out the citation;

*When you joined the American Rhododendron Society Eureka Chapter nearly 30 years ago, you were the consummate "dragee," but in the intervening years you have become one of the Chapter's most enthusiastic and committed members.*

*You have served us well as a membership chair, treasurer, and newsletter editor for many years, but your dedication and service do not stop there. You have been chief cook and bottle washer for Board of Director meetings, served as our bookkeeper, handled raffle tickets at our monthly meetings and at our annual show and plant sale, and served as general all-round organizer and cheerleader for events ranging from plant sales to picnics to garden tours.*

*You have handled sometimes incredible demands on your time and patience with grace and proved over and over again the truth of the old saying that if you want a job done well, you should ask a busy person to do it.*

*For your many, many contributions to the Chapter, The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society is proud to Award you the Bronze medal this 26th day of February 2015. Photo by Steve Cole*



### **Plant of the Month *Rhododendron* 'Alice Eastwood' by Don Wallace**

Although there is little information about this plant, it is still a valuable plant for any garden with a mild maritime climate. The plant was created by one of the Bay Area Hybridizers some time ago, and has as parents some *R. Maddenii*, some *R. cinnabarinum*, and perhaps others. The plant grows quite tall, 8 ft – 10 ft easily, and can live in full sun or some shade. The foliage is better in a little shade I believe. The flowers are fairly large bell type blossoms that open in loose clusters. They are white with a rose-red color on the outside starting at where the petiole connects and

extending for about 1 inch, then shading to light pink, then white. The throat is also the rose-pink color, with some yellowish shading. Each flower is reminiscent of Easter Lilies. There is a slight fragrance on warm days, but I wouldn't characterize this plant as 'fragrant'. The plant flowers quite heavily most years, creating a sight to behold. In Humboldt County *R. 'Alice Eastwood'* is one to have. *Photo by Don Wallace*



## WORD OF THE MONTH: - ii

By, Bruce Palmer

Tim will be giving us a talk on *Rhododendron maddenii* and its relatives this month, so it seems like a good time to discuss what some of those endings for scientific names mean. The species name in this case is *Rhododendron maddenii*. *Rhododendron* is the genus (Greek, genos, race) designation. The *maddenii* part is called the specific epithet (from the Greek *epitheton*, that which is added). The epithet is supposed to distinguish each species in a genus from all others in the genus and the name sets a plant apart from all other plants. This system of naming plants was a simplification of previous descriptive systems and was first used widely by Linnaeus in the eighteenth century. At that time Latin was still being used in as the common language among clergy and scholars in Europe. To facilitate understanding among biologists, Latin names and descriptions for organisms were required. That practice developed into a set of agreed-upon practices revised and published periodically as the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*.

Epithets are supposed to be descriptive, calling attention to certain obvious visible characteristics, but botanists have never been able to resist naming newly discovered plants after friends, acquaintances or sponsors. In this case the famous plant collector J. D. Hooker named the plant in 1851 (that's what the Hook after the species name means). According to H. H. Davidian in his four volume *The Rhododendron Species*, Lt. Col. E. Madden was a traveler in India. We don't know what his relationship to J. D. Hooker was. Davidian is the best source for the meanings of specific epithets.

So, why does the epithet end in -ii? The ending -ii (or -i, depending on how the person's name ends) was supposed to indicate that the person named was the discoverer of the plant, but it was never used consistently that way. The first code in 1867 required this, but the rule was never enforced and was later discarded. Thus we have species epithets ending in -ii (*Rhododendron maddenii*), indicating possession in Latin, literally Madden's Rhododendron. If the name was strictly honorary, it was supposed to end in -anum as in



*Rhododendron macabeum*, Photo by Bruce Palmer

*Rhododendron macabeum*, named after Mr. McCabe, a deputy district administrator in the Naga Hills in North-west India where the plant was discovered. With this ending it's an adjective, the McCabe Rhododendron. *Macabeum* is spelled differently from the man's name because the code requires that Irish or Scottish names starting with M, Mc or Mac are to be spelled mac.

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*Rhododendron dalhousiae*,  
Photo by Bruce Palmer



*Rhododendron maddenii*  
Photo by Bruce Palmer

To confuse all of this even further, Latin is highly gender-sensitive. Thus the ending *-ae* and the name *Rhododendron dalhousiae*, named by J.D. Hooker after Lady Dalhousie, wife of the Governor General of India. The original idea of distinguishing whether a plant was named after its discoverer or was an honorary epithet was still being debated when I took taxonomy courses in the 1950s, but nobody pays attention anymore and you can use either form to designate the new rhododendron species you discover when you take that trip to the Himalaya next year.

After all this, if you think everything is settled, guess again. The code that governs naming is revised every few years and is no longer called the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*. The latest code, adopted in Melbourne in 2011 is titled the *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi and plants*. What appear to be typos in the title (with algae, fungi and plants not capitalized) are not. Advances in microscopy and biochemistry have led us to realize that differences among groups of organisms are not as distinct as we once thought. We are no longer sure that algae, fungi, plants and animals are sufficiently distinct from each other to be placed in separate kingdoms. A good example at the family level is in Oriental cuisine. Next time you go to an Oriental restaurant note that the lotus root, from a plant we thought was in a family with water lilies, isn't even remotely related and is no longer put in the same family. Instead the lotus is much more closely related to the proteas, those plants from Southwest Australia and South Africa that give us the exotic blossoms and Macadamia nuts.



***So many memories  
flood my mind —  
cherry blossoms  
— Bashō***







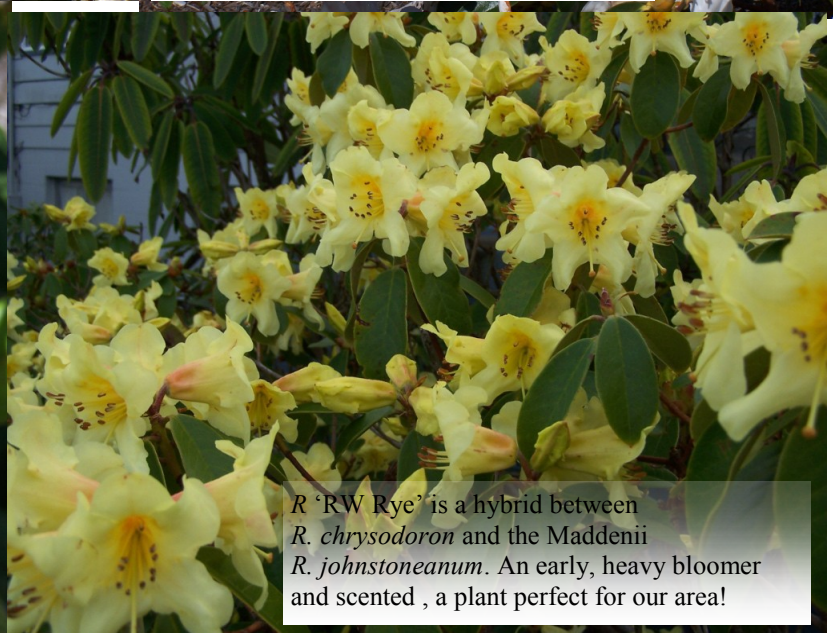
*R. ciliicalyx*, which is half of the cross that made *R. 'Else Frye'*



*R. odoriferum* now called *R. crassum*



*R. 'Patricia Marie'*, with just opening buds



*R. 'RW Rye'* is a hybrid between *R. chrysodoron* and the *Maddenii* *R. johnstoneanum*. An early, heavy bloomer and scented, a plant perfect for our area!



*R. taronense*, which smells like heaven



*R. Nuttallii*, beautiful color on new leaf

## Maddenii Rhododendrons and Hybrids





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

**March 26, 2015;** Tim Walsh (ARS Silver Medalist, ARS District 5 Director) will talk about the '*WEEDs*' of Humboldt Rhodos, the *Maddenii* Rhodos.

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

**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.



Max Abrahamsen and Bruce Palmer along with Wyatt Ledbetter (Gail and Rod Ledbetter's son) are working to get a spruced up WEB site for the Eureka Chapter...stay tuned!

There is still time to register for the Annual Convention May 7 to 10 in Sidney, BC, Canada [www.2015rhodo.ca](http://www.2015rhodo.ca)

## 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