

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

***The next meeting
Thursday October 26, 7:00 p.m.***

*Woman's Club
1531 J Street
Eureka, California*

Pre-Meeting No Host Dinner 5:15

***Café Nooner, 409 Opera Alley
in Old Town Eureka***

Call Nelda 443-8049

*For a reservation so there will be enough
seating*



*Eureka Chapter
American Rhododendron Society*

*Rhododendrons
in the Redwoods*

October 2017

Dennis Bottemiller Making More Plants at RSBG

The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet on Thursday, October 26, 2017 The meeting and program will be held at the Eureka Woman's Club 1531 J Street in Eureka beginning at 7:00 P.M.

Dennis Bottemiller is the Nursery/Propagation manager at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden (RSBG) in Federal Way Washington. The Eureka Chapter is a member of RSBG. He also tends the vireya collection and Rutherford Conservatory. He began his gardening career at an early age with a fascination for growing corn and to this day remains rather "corny". Dennis augmented his plant knowledge with a degree in Production Horticulture from Washington State University in 1989 and really began his love for rhododendrons during an internship at the RSBG in 1987 which led to his nursery position upon graduation.

In his nearly 30 year span at RSBG, Dennis took a 7 year hiatus from rhododendrons to manage the collections and structures at the Victorian glasshouse W.W. Seymour Conservatory in Tacoma Washington. This experience grounded him in conservatory culture and prepared him for the adventure of building and maintaining a new conservatory for the RSBG which opened in 2010 and has been the highlight of his career in garden work.

The Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden is home to the largest collection of species rhododendrons in North America and is presented in a beautiful naturalistic display setting on 24 acres. It is also a unique resource for botanic and horticultural research institutions worldwide.

Dennis will talk about *Plants and Plantings at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden: And how we make them work.*

Sit back and enjoy an evening of new plants and some old favorite plants in the garden setting at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden. We will take a photographic tour through the seasons both in the garden and the Rutherford Conservatory and Dennis will point out some of the ideas that work for successfully growing difficult plants.



R. 'Candy Red Apple'



Plant of the Month:

Rhododendron 'Candy Red Apple'

By Don Wallace

When I made this cross about 10 years ago, I was wanting to create a red flowering rhododendron with very shiny foliage. I really like *R. Rubicon* for shiny foliage red, so decided to use it for the seed parent. I had another hybrid created by the Thompson Nursery, *R. forestii* 'Repens' x *R. 'Noyo Chief'* that has super shiny foliage, a red flower, and stays low. I decided to use this plant as the pollen parent. After raising a large number of seedlings, I chose the best one to be called 'Candy Red Apple'. The plant grows to 5 ft tall and wide in 10 years, has red

flowers and very shiny foliage. The blooms come out in mid to late March. It will take full sun or some shade, and makes flower buds easily.

ARS 2018 Convention in Germany, "North America meets Europe"

The 2018 ARS Convention will be in Bremen, Germany 20-27 May 2018, with optional tours before and after the convention. The schedule probably will change slightly in the next couple months.

1st Pre Tour: May 7-12 Optional 5 days visiting Dutch Gardens including Keukenhof Gardens (starts in Amsterdam)

2nd Pre Tour: May 12-14

Optional 2 days visiting RHODO 2018 Rhododendron Festival and Hachmann Nursery (starts in Bremen)

3rd Pre-Tour: May 13-20

Optional 7 days visiting gardens in Denmark & Sweden including public and private gardens (starts in Bremen)

Convention: May 20-27

6 day convention in Bremen from May 20 to 27 including 3 days of garden and nursery tours (starts in Bremen)

Post-Tour: May 27-30

Optional 4 days visiting gardens in Finland.

Details and registration for this Convention at: ars2018.org

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– Sympetalous

By Bruce Palmer

October is not blooming time for rhodies, but have you ever noticed that rhododendron flower petals drop as a unit when the bloom is finished? That's because the flowers are **sympetalous**. **Sympetalous** is a three-part word: sym- derives from the Greek *syn*, together; -petal- comes from the Greek *petalon*, a leaf (flower petals are modified from leaves); -ous is directly from the Old French *ous*, in turn altered from the Latin *us*, having or full of. Sympetalous flowers have their petals joined at the base in a tube-like arrangement, shown by the tiny truss at left (near actual size).



R. sargentianum 'Maricee'

Plants with sympetalous flowers are not as common as those with distinct (separate) petals such as roses, but all members of the family Ericaceae (to which rhododendrons belong) have sympetalous flowers. In our region think about Huckleberry, Salal, Pieris, Manzanita and Madrone in addition to our native *Rhododendron macrophyllum* (= *Rhododendron californicum*) and *Rhododendron occidentale* and all of the hybrid and species rhodies in our gardens.

What might be the advantage for a plant to have sympetalous flowers? It's not very clear for Rhododendrons, but for many other sympetalous plants it is unmistakable. Think about Fuchsias (named for Leonhart Fuchs [1501-1566], predecessor of Linnaeus, who set the stage for accurate plant descriptions, illustrations and names). The nectaries are at the bottom of a tube well-suited for the beaks of hummingbirds that live in the American Tropics, the

geographical origin of the genus *Fuchsia*.

My favorite examples, of course, are in Hawai'i. In the Hawai'ian cloud forests above an elevation of 4,000 feet, a number of endemic giant Lobelias thrive. Most have large, curved sympetalous flowers.

One such plant is *Lobelia gloria montis* (named by Joseph Rock of Rhododendron Society fame), one of the larger giant lobelias living near the summit of Pu'u Kukui at about 5,000 feet in the West Maui Mountains. This and other Lobelias in the cloud forests are pollinated by several species of endemic Honeycreepers, probably descended and evolved from finches that arrived in the islands accidentally. Most Hawai'ian Honey-



Piiwi (*Drepanis coccinea*) showing curved beak

creepers have distinctly curved beaks adapted to extract nectar from the curved, sympetalous flowers of Lobelias. Piiwi is a good Honeycreeper example. The two Piiwi are shown *in flagrante delicto*, but this is the only photo

I was ever able to get of Honeycreepers with curved beaks.

There are examples of the same adaptations in the family Ericaceae. Most members of the family are found in the Northern Hemisphere, but the genus *Erica* has a large number of species in Southern Africa. Most sympetalous flowers in South African *Ericas* are curved, pollinated by the curved-beaked Sunbirds. The illustration is a South African *Erica* in Maria Krenik's collection.

Not all sympetalous flowers are designed for bird pollination. Snapdragons, for example, capture insects temporarily in their tubular flowers, then release them after pollination. There are lots of other examples showing adaptations related to sympetaly, but that's enough for now. Enjoy your sympetalous Rhododendron flowers when they appear next Spring.

Submitted Photos



South African *Erica* showing curved flowers

THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

EUREKA CHAPTER

BRONZE MEDAL AWARD

YOU JOINED THE EUREKA CHAPTER, ARS, MORE THAN EIGHT YEARS AGO. SOON THEREAFTER, YOU TOOK ON THE TASK OF MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN FOR THE EUREKA CHAPTER, THEN WEBSITE COORDINATOR, THEN PRESIDENT. WHEN THE EUREKA CHAPTER DECIDED TO HOST THE 2017 ARS NATIONAL CONVENTION, YOU CONSTRUCTED AND ADMINISTERED THE BUDGET. WITHOUT YOUR EFFORTS THE CONVENTION COULD NOT HAVE SUCCEEDED. THE EUREKA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY IS PROUD TO PRESENT THE BRONZE MEDAL TO

MAX ABRAHAMSEN

28 SEPTEMBER 2017



THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

EUREKA CHAPTER

BRONZE MEDAL AWARD

YOU JOINED THE EUREKA CHAPTER, ARS, MORE THAN FIVE YEARS AGO. SOON THEREAFTER, YOU TOOK ON THE TASK OF MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN FOR THE EUREKA CHAPTER AND HAVE EXCELLED AT THAT POSITION. WHEN THE EUREKA CHAPTER DECIDED TO HOST THE 2017 NATIONAL CONVENTION, YOU AGREED IMMEDIATELY TO BE THE REGISTRAR. WITHOUT YOUR EFFORTS THE CONVENTION COULD NOT HAVE SUCCEEDED. THE EUREKA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY IS PROUD TO PRESENT THE BRONZE MEDAL TO

ELLEN GILL

28 SEPTEMBER 2017



THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

EUREKA CHAPTER

BRONZE MEDAL AWARD

MANY MEMBERS OF THE EUREKA CHAPTER HAVE KNOWN YOU SINCE YOU WERE A TODDLER. YOUR DECISION TO TAKE A DEGREE IN COMPUTER SCIENCE HAS PROVED TO BE A BOON FOR THE CHAPTER. WHEN YOU AGREED TO SET UP A WEB SITE FOR US AND TO BE WEBMASTER, THE CHAPTER BENEFITTED IMMENSELY. WITHOUT YOUR GREAT WEBSITE, THE 2017 ARS NATIONAL CONVENTION COULD NOT HAVE SUCCEEDED. THE EUREKA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY IS PROUD TO PRESENT THE BRONZE MEDAL TO

WYATT LEDBETTER

28 SEPTEMBER 2017



O Suns and skies and clouds of June,
And flowers of June together,
Ye cannot rival for one hour
October's bright blue weather;

When loud the bumblebee makes haste,
Belated, thriftless vagrant,
And goldenrod is dying fast,
And lanes with grapes are fragrant.
—Helen Hunt Jackson (1830–85)



The trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky.

—William Butler Yeats (1865–1939)

Cornus capitata, autumn fruit at Humboldt Botanical Garden, Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden



How the Woolly Bear Caterpillar Became Famous

In the fall of 1948, Dr. C. H. Curran, curator of insects at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, took his wife 40 miles north of the city to Bear Mountain State Park to look at woolly bear caterpillars.

- Dr. Curran collected as many caterpillars as he could in a day, determined the average number of reddish-brown segments, and forecast the coming winter weather through a reporter friend at *The New York Herald Tribune*.

Dr. Curran's experiment, which he continued over the next eight years, attempted to prove scientifically a weather rule of thumb that was as old as the hills around Bear Mountain. The resulting publicity made the woolly worm the most recognizable caterpillar in North America.

The caterpillar Curran studied, the banded woolly bear, is the larval form of *Pyrrharctia isabella*, the Isabella tiger moth.

- This medium-size moth, with yellowish-orange and cream-colored wings spotted with black, is common from northern Mexico through-

out the United States and across the southern third of Canada.

- As moths go, the Isabella isn't much to look at compared with other species, but its immature larva, called the *black-ended bear* or the *woolly bear* (and, throughout the South, *woolly worm*) is one of the few caterpillars most people can identify.

Woolly bears do not actually feel much like wool—they are covered with short, stiff bristles of hair.

Article from The 1999 Old Farmer's Almanac



Our friends, **Bee Brown** and **Nan Ray** of the **De Anza Chapter** donated two 20 ft X 20 ft tents to the Eureka Chapter. We look forward to filling the tents with plants for the sale during the Rhody Show and Sale April 27, 28 and 29, 2018 at Pacific View School. Ann Wieland has agreed to be our Show Chairman. Put the dates on the calendar and be prepared to show your best flowers, buy some new plants and volunteer to help.

Eureka Chapter/American Rhododendron Society
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Eureka Chapter Newsletter is published monthly
except during July, August and November.

Submissions from members are encouraged and
should be sent to June Walsh, Newsletter Editor,
by email RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net
Membership information and applications are avail-
able from Ellen Gill. Htg1anderg@suddenlink.net

Eureka Chapter is a member of the **Humboldt
Botanical Gardens**, Eureka, CA and **The Rhodo-
dendron Species Botanical**, Federal Way, WA.

Eureka Chapter is a chapter of the American Rho-
dodendron Society a 501 (c) (3) charitable organi-
zation.

www.EurekaRhody.org



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Rhododendrons
in the Redwoods

Future Programs

October 26, 2017	Dennis Bottemiller	Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden
December 7, 2017	Holiday Potluck	Bruce Palmer, Rhododendron
January 25, 2018	Pete Haggard	Pollinators
February 22, 2018	John Stephens and Steve McCormick	Rhododendrons in South America
March 22, 2018	Jason Martinez	Plant Hunting in China
April 26, 2018	Ali Sarlak	Flora of Iran
April 27 to 29, 2018	Meeting and Annual Flower Show and Plant Sale	
May 20—27, 2018	ARS Convention, Bremem Germany	ars2018.org
May 24, 2018	Member Mini Show	
June 3, 2017	Member and Guest Garden Tour and Picnic	



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A Special “Thank you” to Mollie Smith and Coastal Business Systems for doing this special Newsletter printing which goes to every member. Mollie also printed our Convention 2017 color brochures.

Eureka Chapter Officers and Board Members

For board member contact information or if you are interested in attending a board meeting which are held the first Wednesday of the month at 7PM, call or email June Walsh 707-443-0604