

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

The next meeting

*Thursday September 28, 7:00 p.m.
Woman's Club
1531 J Street
Eureka, California*

POTLUCK at 6 pm

**Bring what you do best; main
dish, sides, salads, desserts
Chapter supplies plates, etc
PROGRAM at 7 pm**



*Eureka Chapter
American Rhododendron Society*

*Rhododendrons
in the Redwoods*

September 2017 Exploring the Floral Treasures of the Sierra Nevada

The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet on Thursday, September 28, 2017. The meeting and program will be held at the Eureka Woman's Club 1531 J Street in Eureka beginning at 6:00 P.M. with a potluck and the program to begin at 7 P. M.

The guest speaker will be Don Selcer who will talk about exploring the Sierra Nevada Range for wildflowers. He always liked backpacking, collecting things, photography and rhododendrons.

He grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, the home of Holden Arboretum and the Leach Rhododendron Research Station, but it wasn't until he moved to California for pediatric residency training that he discovered gardening. He has recently retired after more than 30 years in his medical practice. Don now volunteers at UCBG in the Asian section.

Don has been gardening with rhodies since the early 80's, mainly growing species from seed on his steep, wooded residential lot in Oakland. He is an active member of the California Chapter. Don has traveled to many of the Rhododendron Meccas of the world; to Sikkim and India, and Yunnan China. He traveled on a Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden collecting expedition with Steve Hootman in fall 2001 to another part of Yunnan--this one to explore the Dulong River Valley which had not seen Westerners for 80 years. He went with an RSBG sponsored tour in late April and early May 2012 to Guangxi, Guizhou, and Chongqing prov-



Leptosiphon montanus (mustang clover)



Pioneer Basin

inces, seeing rhododendrons and lots of other shrubs, trees, and wildflowers.

Photos were submitted by Don Selcer.

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.

Convention 2017—North Tour

By Ann Wieland

Editor's note: Ann submitted this article for the Convention 2015 Wrap-up newsletter. The newsletter editor inadvertently left it out, sigh...and apologies.

For the “Rhododendrons in the Redwoods 2017 International Convention” one of the featured Garden tours was the North Tour that went from 8:00 am-2:00pm on both Friday, April 28th and Saturday, April 29th.

In the initial planning for this tour it was decided to highlight gardens that display our exceptional coastal vistas. Since people who attended the conference were from around the world—our scenic coastline was a real treat.

We were grateful to have tour buses—since the slide in Leggett left us wondering whether or not we would have busses. Our good luck prevailed, and the North Tour went as planned.

The first garden, which is a one acre garden overlooking the Pacific Ocean, was the Morrison/Magnuson garden in McKinleyville. The owners/gardeners had created a four page description of their garden—they call their “Recovery Garden” Since 2006, when a 106mph squall came and toppled 38 huge pines, they have been replanting and creating an artist’s palette of colors. The mix of plants—some rare from around the world—is a joy to the eye. The house location and design really highlight the beauty of the garden.

As one of the tour hosts, I heard two comments that stood out. One person said, “I wonder what it would be like to live in this paradise.” Another person said, “This is the nicest small garden I have ever toured, and I have been on a lot of garden tours around the world.”

The tour continued to Singing Tree Gardens—which is not your average nursery—it is more an arboretum. Tour attendees strolled through the display gardens, jotting down names of plants, and admiring the overall effect of the nursery. The display gardens feature rhododendrons, azaleas, conifers, specialized trees, shrubs, heathers and unusual perennials. Many attendees who were driving home were buying plants too. The nursery is one-of-a-kind and the uniqueness was appreciated by the group.

Then we continued on to Pat Wells garden in Trinidad. The garden is around five acres, and Pat has been developing her garden for about 24 years. She designed a garden where shrubs and trees are the bones of her beds, and perennials are the backup singers in her garden. For our garden handout we had an article that Pat wrote for Fine Gardening Magazine in April 2013. The title of the article was “Designing with Shrubs”. Her garden is an excellent example of a well designed, mature garden. After walking through all these meandering paths of shrubs and trees—you come to the house with spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean. She has plant specimens from around the world! Pat was very available for questions and eager to share cuttings of plants. Again as a tour host, I heard a memorable comment, “This is the finest collection of different plant species in one garden that I have ever seen.”

Although we scheduled a stop at a rest stop for lunch—everyone on the bus didn’t want to use any of our time—not touring gardens. So people ate on the bus.

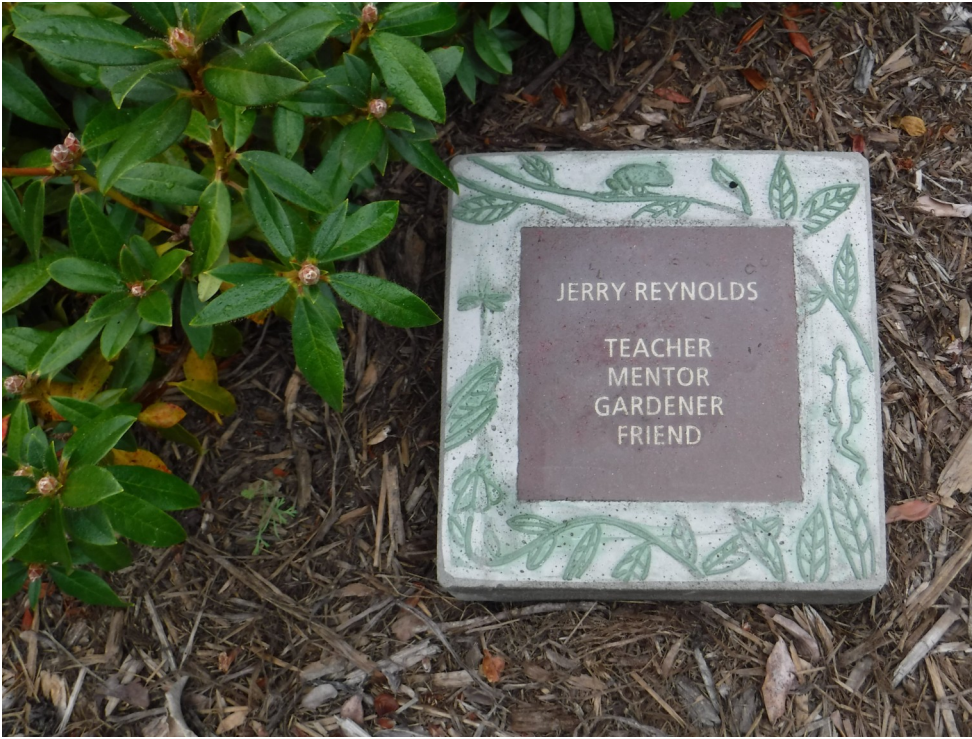
Our last stop was Stagecoach Hill Azalea Reserve, which is a 40 acre western azalea area. And in 1983, the California State Parks Foundation, with the donations from garden clubs, the Humboldt Area Foundation, and the California Coastal Conservancy were able to acquire this property. Luckily, even though it was a month before the peak bloom, some azaleas were in bloom as well as other wildflowers. Many volunteers worked to clear blackberries and brush from around the large azaleas to make this North Tour more enjoyable. Again, the vista of the Pacific Ocean was breathtaking.

Each person left the tour with a folder of handouts from each of the gardens, many great photos, and memories of a pleasant tour.

Jerry Reynolds' memorial paver installed at Humboldt Botanical Garden

Our friend and Chapter President Jerry Reynolds passes away in November 2015. Jerry was very active in Chapter projects having been the Show Chair for many years and president also national projects having been the ARS Publicity Chair, also for many years.

His friends from his HSU Journalism days, personal friends and neighbors and Chapter



members gathered in the Humboldt Botanical Garden Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden (where he spent many a Tuesday dead-heading) to honor his life. A collection was taken up to place a memorial plaque in the garden to commemorate his contributions. The plaque is placed next to *Rhododendron ciliatum* which Jerry spent many hours each spring sitting on an over-turned bucket deadheading. The plaque is just across the path from the Eureka Chapter bench.



The September Eureka Chapter Board of Directors was held at President Max's house in Redway. Shown from back left; Gail Ledbetter, secretary, Don Wallace, programs, Bruce Palmer, Gold Medalist. Next row from left; Margaret Cole, Mini-show, Nelda Palmer, vice president, Karen Angel. Next row from left; Ibbey Gerner, Sue Hemmenn, at-large, Ann Wieland, Flower Show, Annalee Veach, Diane Larkin, at-large. Front row from left; June Walsh, newsletter, Tim Walsh, Treasurer, Eleanor Gayner, publicity. AND, a picture all to himself President Max Abrahamsen! Max BBQed hamburgers and the rest of the attendees brought their best potluck offerings.

The Eureka Chapter board meets the first Wednesday of the month beginning at 6:00 pm with a potluck meal, the formal meeting begins at 7:00 pm. Next meeting October 4th. All members are welcome to attend. Call June for more information.

Word of the Month– Bract

By **Bruce Palmer**

Recently, while photographing in my yard, I came across a stem of *Rhododendron falconeri* ssp. *exemium* whose bracts had persisted for some time while the leaves were extending and after they were fully extended (see Figure 1). Bract (Latin: *Bractae*, a thin iron sheet) seemed like a good word to explore.

The loose pieces we remove to display our rhodies at the annual flower show are bracts. They are not trash but were there to protect the leaves or inflorescences (trusses) from the time they first developed shortly after the last bloom through the winter until it came time to flower or put on new growth. Bracts are modified leaves, though they often do not appear to be.

Bracts regularly serve as protective structures in flowering plants. Typically they drop off as the leaves or flowers develop, but not always. In grasses they persist and are the obvious features around nearly invisible flowering parts and around the seeds of grains before they are winnowed. The papery structures around tomatillos are bracts.

A number of flowering plants use brightly colored bracts as attractants for pollinators and landing platforms for pollinating birds. The Poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) is a good example. The Striking red structures are modified leaves, Bracts, that serve to attract humming birds and furnish them a landing spot. The flowers are tiny separate female and male structures at the center.. The bracts we are most familiar with are found around dogwood inflorescences. They range in color from the white we are most familiar with through green, yellow and

pink. Figure 2 shows exceptionally large white bracts surrounding an inflorescence on a Mountain Dogwood (*Cornus nittallii*) in Yosemite Valley. This population of dogwoods is one of the lesser known but more spectacular sights in Yosemite in early spring.

Rhododendron inflorescences (trusses) have their protective bracts arranged in a whorl-like spiral around the base and interspersed among the individual flowers (see Figure 3). This configuration is called an involucre (Latin, *involucrum*, a wrapper). As the flowers emerge, the bracts drop off. With the bracts gone it is clear that there are two tiny thread-like structures on the stalk of each flower. These are called bracteoles or bractlets and are considered to be important in identifying a plant as a rhododendron. Most Rhododendrons do not have a calyx around the corolla. A calyx is not needed for protection of the other flower parts. If they have a calyx, it is usually reduced to a small swelling at the base of the flower. Occasionally a sport appears where the calyx is well-developed and colorful. That can be desirable to Horticulturists, who often call that configuration “hose in hose”.

The next time you are cleaning the bracts and bracteoles from your trusses for the chapter’s flower show, take a minute to appreciate the pieces of “chaff”. They often have interesting structures and are definitely not trash before the trusses open.



Figure 1: Persistent bracts on new stems of *R. falconeri* ssp. *exemium*



Figure 2: Large white bracts surrounding inflorescence on Mountain Dogwood, *Cornus nuttallii*



Figure 3: Buds of *R. lilliflorum* emerging from protective bracts



Eris McCarthy , long time member of the Eureka Chapter passed away unexpectedly on August 3ed. She leaves behind Eureka Chapter members Royal (son) and Willie (daughter-in-law) McCarthy, and Daughters Chrisiane and Cherie. She will be missed by her very special neighbors and fellow Eureka Chapter members Verne and Paula Trinoskey. Eris was very supportive of the Eureka Chapter; most recently she made a donation to support the 2017 ARS Convention and volunteered in the Trinoskey's garden welcoming the convention tour. See her full life story at the Times-Standard obituary <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/times-standard/obituary.aspx?n=eris-mccarthy&pid=186368837>

Pictures from top left: Eris in a neighbor's garden, Eris and Jerry Reynolds discussing the finer points of flower show judging, Eris with Don Wallace at

Singing Tree Gardens, Eris and her sister Patsy at an ARS Convention in Victoria BC, Tim Walsh, Gary Eagles and Eris on a Chapter Garden tour. Always beautiful, charming and kind, your newsletter editor will miss her happy, warm greeting.



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 mailed to June Walsh, Newsletter Editor, 2050 Irving Drive, Eureka, CA 95503-7022. Or by email RhodyHosiel@suddenlink.net Membership information and applications available from Ellen Gill. Higlanderg@suddenlink.net Eureka Chapter is a member of the Humboldt Botanical Gardens Foundation, Eureka, CA and The Rhododendron Species Botanical, Federal Way, WA. Eureka Chapter is a chapter of the American Rhododendron Society a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization.

www.EurekaRhody.org

Future Programs

September 28, 2017	Don Selcer	Plant Exploring in the Sierras
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	SFBG at Strybing Arboretum
April 26, 2018	Ali Sarlak	Flora of Iran
April 27 to 29, 2018	Meeting and Annual Flower Show and Plant Sale	
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