

## AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

### Eureka Chapter

*The next meeting*  
Thursday January 25, 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

## January 2018

## Pete Haggard It is All About the Pollinators

*The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet on Thursday, **January 25, 2018** 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 welcome back Pete Haggard for another of his interesting and educational programs. Pete is co-author with Judy Haggard of the field guide “**Insects of the Pacific Northwest**”, a book which your editor references often while in the garden (always looking for zombies!).

Pete retired from the Humboldt County Agricultural Commissioner's Office in 2006 after 34 yrs. Pete helps teach both UC Master Gardener Program and UC Master Food Preserver Program (he has a shirt to prove that he is a Master Fermenter).

Pete is the Garden Chair for the California Native Plant Society- North Coast Chapter and teaches gardening classes for Humboldt State University,



Monarch Butterfly, Airlie Botanical Garden, Wilmington NC

College of Extended Education and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Pete's program will cover some of the many pollinators found in our gardens in addition to the ones you already familiar with; bees and butterflies. Pete's photography will bring these creatures up close so you, too, will be able to identify them in your garden.

*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.*

*A liquid moon  
moves gently among  
the long branches.  
Thus having prepared their buds  
against a sure winter  
the wise trees  
stand sleeping in the cold.*  
—William Carlos Williams (1883–1963)



Rh. 'True Blue'

### Plant of the Month: *R.* 'True Blue'

By Don Wallace

Although not as blue as some might desire, this new hybrid from Dan Bones and Jim Smith is quite worthy of growing. Most all purple rhododendrons have *R. ponticum* in their ancestry, or 'blood' as rhododendron hybridizers say, and these genetics will always add a bit of red to the purple flower color. This makes getting a good blue color just about impossible.

In this cross of (*R. campanulatum* x *R. degronianum* ssp. *yakushimanum*) x *R.* 'Black Eye', there is less *R. ponticum* blood, and is only found in the pollen parent *R.* 'Black Eye'. The seed parent, having the species *R. campanulatum* in it adds a more 'true blue' color to the mix. So,, even though the flower color is not really 'true blue' it is more

blue than most all others. The leaves are fabulous, being very dark-green and textured. This results in a shrub that will look very attractive in the landscape all year round. The plant will be just as dark-green in full sun or shade. The full trusses come out in mid to late April. This plant is very easy to grow and will be 4ft x 4ft in 10 years.



# *THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY EUREKA CHAPTER BRONZE MEDAL AWARD*

*YOU JOINED THE EUREKA CHAPTER, ARS, MORE THAN SEVEN YEARS AGO. ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, YOU ACCEPTED THE TASK OF VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR FOR THE ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW AND EXCELLED AT THAT POSITION. WHEN THE EUREKA CHAPTER DECIDED TO HOST THE 2017 ARS NATIONAL CONVENTION, YOU AGREED IMMEDIATELY TO BE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR. WITHOUT YOUR EFFORTS THE CONVENTION COULD NOT HAVE RUN SMOOTHLY. THE EUREKA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY IS PROUD TO PRESENT THE*



*BRONZE  
MEDAL  
TO  
DIANE  
LARKIN*

*December 7 2017*

*Bruce Palmer made  
the presentation to  
Diane Larkin*

*January is here,  
With eyes that keenly glow--  
A frost-mailed warrior striding  
A shadowy steed of snow.  
—Edgar Fawcett (1847–1904)*





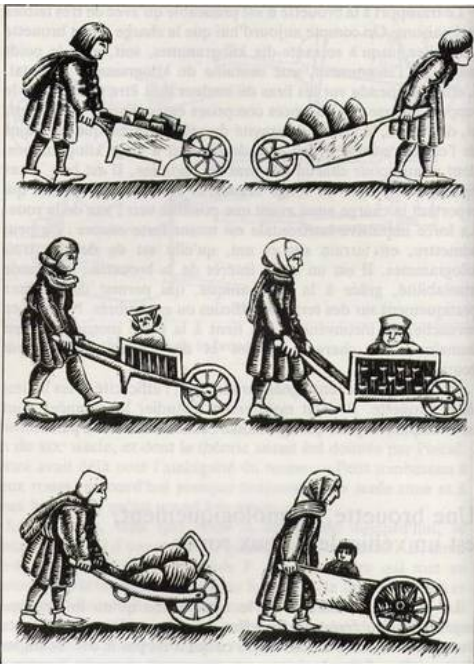
## A Healthy Prescription for the New Year

*By June Walsh, UCCE Master Gardener*

If you are out in your garden this time of year, like I am, you are making mounds of brush clippings, piles of wet grass, a few hoards of fallen leaves. If you have a compost heap you know what treasure lies in those piles. If you haven't begun the alchemy of composting, now is a great time to get started.

Here's a gem of advice: Composting is nothing more than putting your garden and kitchen scraps in one place. There, isn't that easy? Here are a few tips to get you started.

1. There is no "Right" way to compost, you will find what works for you. The worst thing that will happen is that it will take a long time to make compost, your compost may be too hot and lose some microorganism or your pile will be too big to turn and you give up for the season.
2. Your pile should be at about 3×3 feet but not so big that you struggle to turn it. If you turn it once a week or so, you will have more success. If you just pile it up and don't turn it, you will have compost next year...no worries.
3. Layer the brown leaves and green clippings and grass. If you have a chipper shredder, you can run your material through it first. You can also run your lawn mower over your clippings. The smaller your material is the faster it will compost. Simply put, layer fresh garden scraps (grass clippings, cuttings—green materials with water content) with brown (fall leaves, spent grasses—dead garden material lacking water). Toss in some kitchen scraps (no oils, dairy or meats, no dog or cat waste; we don't need another way to attract critters to the garden!) and you have a compost pile. You can add horse, cow, chicken or rabbit manure, just be sure to mix it in.
4. Heat from the microorganisms that decompose the materials will generate the compost. Once the microorganisms have had their fill your compost will cool and the worms and beetles and other fauna will come to the feast.



5. Do not let the pile dry out. Like your garden, the compost pile and the living organisms within need water to thrive. Cover your heap with a tarp to conserve moisture.
6. Sun heats the compost. If you live where it is hot, and your pile has full sun, you may need to water it more often to keep it from overheating and drying out.
7. Select a good site. Flat, full to part sun (depending on where you live) and easy to access and not on a hard, impermeable surface. If you pile is on soil the worms WILL find it...no need to purchase worms.

That's it: some heat, some sun, some water and a nice mix of brown and green, stir and let it "cook".

If you want, you can up your composting game and build bins to keep your piles tidy, plant a camouflaging wall of plants in the front to hide the decaying matter or go all out and buy a composting unit. But, like with all things in gardening, the simpler you keep it in the beginning, the more likely you are to stick with it.



## Word of the Month– Eudicot

Remember your high school biology class? You learned that flowering plants (Greek *angion*, a covering and Latin *sperma*, a seed) were divided into two groups, monocotyledons (Greek *monos*, single or alone and *Kotylydon*, a hollow or cavity) and dicotyledons (Greek *dis*, twice). Forget that. DNA analysis has turned plant classification upside down in the last couple of decades. The major categories that you learned (kingdom, phylum or division, class, order, family, genus and species) have remained largely intact so far, but additional categories above kingdom and among the other categories have been added.

The subclass monocotyledoneae remains intact because DNA analysis appears to show that its members are descended from a common ancestor. Dicotyledons, though, seem to have a diverse origin. Those plant groups that fit the traditional definition are called **Eudicotyledons** (Greek *eu*, good). When a **Eudicot** seed sprouts it puts up two leaflets before developing further (think bean sprouts); Monocots start out with only one leaflet.

Based on DNA analysis as well as anatomical characteristics, several angiosperm plant groups do not fit either the monocots or the dicots; they appear to have an earlier origin than other angiosperms. They are similar to dicotyledons but have significant differences and are grouped separately as “early angiosperms”. The early angiosperms include Magnolias, Water Lilies, Black Pepper, Custard Apple (Cherimoya) and Star Anise. Members of the genus *Magnolia* have tepals instead of sepals and petals. Tepal is a modern word used when sepals and petals are the same. Magnolias have large numbers of tepals then stamens then separate carpels (ovaries) arranged spirally in order around a cone-shaped receptacle. Fossil evidence suggests that this is a primitive characteristic. If you were in the Temperate Woodland Garden at Humboldt Botanical Garden last fall you might have noticed the unusual magnolia seed pods



*Magnolia grandiflora*  
SHOWING LARGE NUMBERS OF FLORAL  
PARTS

with red seeds arranged in a spiral. Custard apples (Cherimoya) from Mexico, sometimes found in local grocery stores and one of our favorite yard fruits on Maui, has most of the dicot features but the flowers have the three part arrangement of monocots.

So, back to **Eudicots**. With Magnolias and the other early Angiosperms out of the way, what is left of Dicotyledons (about 85% of all flowering plants)? Recent information favors three grouping. A few families, including Barberries, Poppies and Buttercups, have all dicot characteristics but many stamens and separated ovary sections (carpels). These families are called



MAGNOLIA SEED POD



CHERIMOYA, *Annona cherimola*  
DICOT LEAVES, MONOCOT FLOWER

Early Eudicots. All other Eudicots are divided into two groups. Those related to roses, most with open petals, are called Superrosids (super roses). Those with part or all of the petals joined in a tube like daisies are termed Superastrids (super daisies). Rhododendrons, with tubular flowers, belong to the Superastrids.

To summarize, the designations at the class level are now quite muddled. As a result, plant groups with an apparent common ancestor are grouped into a **Clade** (Greek *Klados*, a group). Groups such as Dicotyledon are out of fashion, but don't panic – the situation will change again as more DNA and fossil information comes in. Stay tuned.

*By Bruce Palmer*

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Submissions from members are encouraged and  
should be sent to June Walsh, Newsletter Editor,  
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Membership information and applications are avail-  
able from Ellen Gill. [Htg1anderg@suddenlink.net](mailto:Htg1anderg@suddenlink.net)

Eureka Chapter is a member of the **Humboldt  
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zation.

[www.EurekaRhody.org](http://www.EurekaRhody.org)



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## Future Programs

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 20-27, 2018	ARS International Convention Bremen Germany <a href="http://ars2018.org">http://ars2018.org</a>	
May 24, 2018	Member Mini Show	
June 3, 2017	Member and Guest Garden Tour and Picnic	



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**Mollie Smith**

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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