

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

The next meeting
Thursday March 22, 7:00 p.m.
Woman's Club
1531 J Street
Eureka, California

Pre-Meeting No Host Dinner 5:15
Bayfront Restaurant
1 F street, Eureka
To RSVP Call June
707-443-0604 to assure seating



Eureka Chapter
American Rhododendron Society

Rhododendrons
in the Redwoods

March 2018

San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum

*The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet on Thursday, **March 22, 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.*

This month's guest speaker is **Jason Martinez**, a Horticulturist at San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum. He has spent the past 12 years caring for the Rhododendron, Mediterranean, and Ancient Plant Gardens. Jason will be sharing some of the Garden's statistics, facts and current developments pertaining to the SF Botanical Garden. Particular focus will be given to Rhododendrons currently in bloom, changes as well as new additions to our Rhododendron Garden and the South East Asia Collection. Jason will also share some photographs from 2017 Rhododendron Symposium at the Rhododendron Species Foundation & Botanical Garden.

Jason attended the American Rhododendron Society Eureka Convention 2017 hosted by the Eureka Chapter Eureka. It will be interesting for Eureka Chapter members who worked so hard to make the Convention a success to see what our guests got to see!

Be sure to bring your friends and neighbors to this entertaining program. If you bring a NEW guest you get a free plant...please let Tim (616-8456) know that you will be bringing a guest so a plant will be ready for you.



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.



June Walsh, Mark Freitas, Mary Lou and Chuck Goodwin release Azaleas from their Berry Bondage

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR STAGECOACH HILL WORK PARTY

This Saturday March 17th and again on March 31st there will be an azalea cleaning work party at Stagecoach Hill Azalea Reserve. Last year Eureka Chapter member Mary Lou Goodwin hosted work parties from winter through spring to remove the berries, ferns and grasses which grow into and on the azaleas. By the time late April arrived for our International convention tours to visit Stagecoach Hill the azaleas looked their very best.

Bring your own lunch, beverages will be provided. Wear long sleeved shirts or jackets and work shoes. Bring hand pruners or battery operated ones. Free coupons for visits to Patrick's

Point State Park will be given to all those attend. There are NO toilet facilities, so plan ahead.

A great time to come visit the Azaleas is any day from June 1 to June 17, when the azaleas should be in full bloom. You can set your own time. Mary Lou will be available to be a tour guide.

Please RVSP, so she can make sure there is enough room at each event for parking.

Mary Lou Goodwin 707- 442-1387

Start taking your SHOW Photographs NOW!

For many years Joe Ortiz has curated our Rhododendron Show Photograph display. Here is a short list of the rules to get you started, click a picture, print the picture and mount or mat the picture then ENTER your work in the show. If you have questions or need help refer to the Show Book or email Joe joebzero@gmail.com

Class 9: Photographs

Entries must be mounted or matted (no frames) prints, black & white or color. Multiple photographs that constitute one entry should be clearly marked as such.

Group A. Any single photograph that features rhododendrons and/or azaleas as the principle subject.

Group B. Any series or collection of photographs that feature rhododendrons and/or azaleas as the central theme.

1. Photographs are not to exceed 12 inches by 16 inches in size including matting and/or mounting, if used. Frames, glass, canvas, and metal are **not** allowed.
2. Judging will be done by popular vote.

We like March, his shoes are
purple
He is new and high;
Makes he mud for dog and
peddler,
Makes he forest dry.

—Emily Dickinson (1830–86)



Know your soil part III

Drainage



Understanding the requirements of specific plants is necessary before planting can be done properly. For example, most rhododendrons require good drainage to prevent root rot, while other plants like Iris, Willow, or Gunnera all either tolerate or like wet soils. So, do some research and find out what your plants like or need before planting and you will increase your success dramatically.



The illustration below applies to plants that need good drainage. The root ball is above any hard pan or poor draining clay layer. This 'raised bed' type of planting is always the best choice for most all ornamental plants, as most need sharp drainage to thrive. If you don't know what kind of drainage you have, you might want to try the Drainage Test, below.

The Drainage Test - step 1

A test you can perform to determine what kind of drainage you have starts by digging a hole 6 inches in diameter and 1 ft. deep somewhere in your garden (preferably somewhere you suspect the drainage to be questionable, like at the bottom of a slope, or somewhere that plants have died more often than thrived). Use a post hole digger if you have one, as this makes the perfect sized hole.



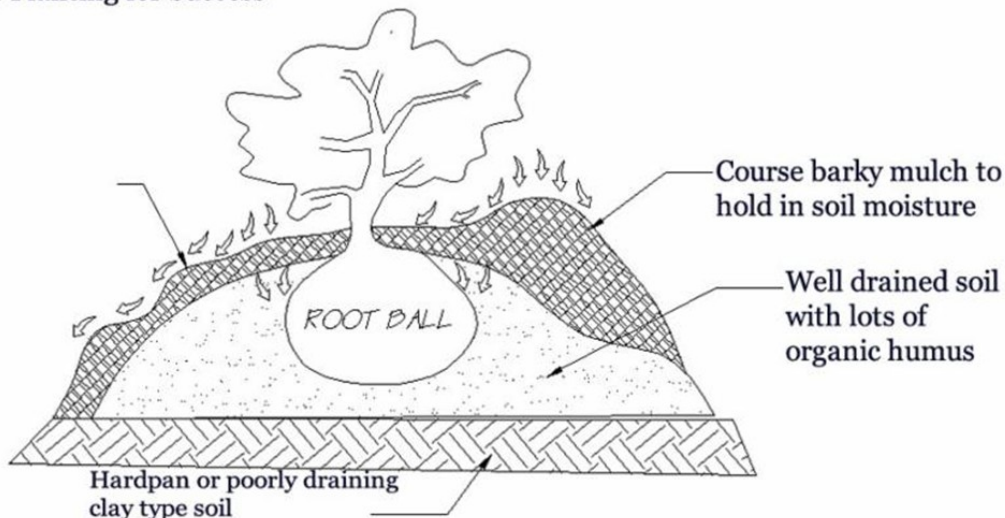
The Drainage Test - step 2

Fill the hole completely to the top with water. Wait until the water has completely drained out, then refill.

The Drainage Test - step 3

If your hole takes less than 3 hours to drain out, then you have adequate drainage for plants to thrive. If the hole takes more than 4 hours to completely drain out, then you have poor drainage and will have to rely on other methods to obtain better drainage.

2. Planting for Success



WORD OF THE MONTH – POLLINATION

By Bruce Palmer

Peter Haggard gave us a great talk on pollinators (pollen derives from the Greek *Pale*, dust) in January. Insects are important pollinators but plants have evolved some truly ingenious ways to insure that pollina-



WHAT YOU SEE WHAT A BEE SEES
MONKEYFLOWER (*Mimulus sp.*)

tors do their work. Rhododendrons have the standard methods for all flowers: the flower colors are not designed for our pleasure but, because insects see in the ultra-violet, are arranged to show insects where the nectar is. The first illustration shows what a monkeyflower looks like to us and to a bee. Notice that the darkest violet area, called the nectar guide, points to the nectary at the base of the flower. That position forces the insect past both the female and male parts of the flower.

That's the standard pollination strategy for most flowers but there are a large number of plants with very specialized pollination strategies. Snapdragons are called that because their

flowers snap shut when an insect enters the flower and do not open until they have been pollinated. Carrion flowers got that name because their flowers smell like rotting meat to attract flies and sometimes beetles as pollinators. Bird-pollinated flowers often have sturdy landing platforms nearby to accommodate the weight of the bird. In Hawaii the flowers of the lobelias have evolved a curved shape to accommodate the curved beaks of their pollinators, the endemic finch-like honeycreepers. White flowers that open at night and are fragrant typically attract moths as pollinators.

It's the orchids that have developed the most diverse and unusual pollination strategies. In all orchids, the pollen is contained in a sac called a pol-



MOSQUITO ON SWAMP ORCHID
Platanthera obtusa

linium. The pollinium in each orchid species is shaped differently and is designed to fit on the neck or head of only one species of insect, often a wasp. One orchid genus (*Epidendrum*) waves small flowers in the wind to attract territorial wasps. The male wasps attack the flowers (which resemble competing wasps)

and pollinate them. Such orchids are called pseudo-antagonists.

Other orchid genera resemble (and sometimes smell like) females

of the pollinating wasp species. The flowers attract the male wasps. The flowers get pollinated but the male wasps get a rude surprise. Such orchids are called pseudo-copulators. The orchid genus *Angraecum* has white flowers opening at night to attract moths. Each species has a long tube at the base of the flower with a nectary at the bottom. The tube in each *Angraecum* species is of a length to fit the "tongue" (proboscis) of a specific moth species. In the 1870s an orchid was discovered in Madagascar with a 12 inch nectar tube. Charles Darwin predicted that a moth would be discovered that had a 12 inch tongue. No entomologists believed him. Fifty years later a hawk moth with a 12 inch tongue was discovered pollinating *Angraecum sesquipedale*. The moth, appropriately, was named *Xanthopan morgani praedicta*. The most recent orchid pollination discovery is in our back yard. A number of swamp orchids thrive in wet mountain areas from here north to British Columbia. Recently some grad students from the University of Washington discovered mosquitoes on a species of swamp orchid. They tested the nectar and found that it contains one of the constituents of human sweat. The mosquitoes are attracted by the scent and pollinate the orchids!

Rhododendrons may not have sophisticated methods for pollination, but they certainly crossbreed easily to give us fantastic color patterns. Let's enjoy them as they begin to show their trusses.



***Lobelia gloria montis* Rock**
WITH CURVED FLOWERS



From this

Floral Arrangements in the April Rhododendron Show



To this!

The classes for the show are:

Group A. Novice Class,

Sunshine Delight – general arrangement using yellows, oranges and or reds.

Group B. Open Class

B-2. **Tom Thumb** – no larger than 6"x 6".

B-3. **Full House** – 5 rhododendrons total in a 3 and 2 combination (example 3 red and 2 yellow)

B-4. **Over The Top** – Size limit to 3ft tall x 3ft wide

Check out the rules, **Class 8 Arrangements**.

SPACE IS LIMITED, SO CALL MARGARET COLE 822-8353 OR EMAIL HER AT:

mscolegarden@gmail.com.



Plant of the Month *Rhododendron 'Martha Wright'*

By Don Wallace

'Martha Wright' is a *Maddenii* hybrid that was created in the 1960's by Maury and Fran Sumner of San Francisco. Maury and his wife Fran also hybridized and registered the more well known 'Mi Amor'. A cross of *R. burmanicum* with *R. 'Fragrantissimum'*, the plant grows about 4-5 ft. tall and the same wide. The flowers are flat faced and fairly large, light yellow, darkening in the throat. The fragrance is not strong, but on a warm day will be noticed. The flowering is quite heavy on a mature specimen, and takes place in late April, into early May. Planted with some of the May blooming

Thanks to all who in the past have brought those most delicious goodies for the meetings. More currently, thanks go to Pat Chaney, Charles Cunningham, Bill Troiano, Randy Eaton and Ursula Lowther.

The March meeting treats will be supplied by: Ibby Gerner, Ellen Gill, Sue Silva and Charles Cunningham. The April meeting treats will be supplied by Annalee Veatch, Sue Hemmann, Karen Angel and Charles Cunningham. *By Nelda Palmer, Hospitality*



Eureka Chapter/American Rhododendron Society
2050 Irving Drive
Eureka, CA 95503-7022

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
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dendron Species Botanical**, Federal Way, WA.

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dodendron Society a 501 (c) (3) charitable organi-
zation.

www.EurekaRhody.org



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Future Programs

March 22, 2018

Jason Martinez

SFBG at Strybing Arboretum

April 26, 2018

Ali Sarlak

Flora of Iran

April 27 to 29, 2018

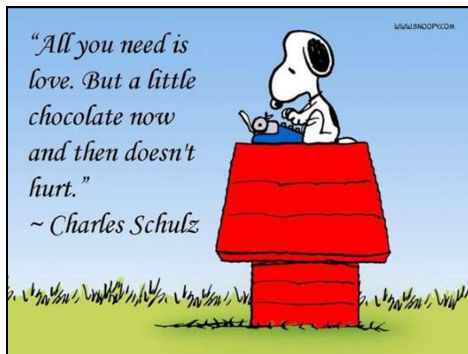
Meeting and Annual Flower Show and Plant Sale

May 24, 2018

Member Mini Show

June 3, 2017

Member and Guest Garden Tour and Picnic



*The little white clouds are racing over the sky,
And the fields are strewn with the gold of the flower of March,
The daffodil breaks under foot, and the tasseled larch
Sways and swings as the thrush goes hurrying by.
—Oscar Wilde (1854–1900)*



Imagine the Possibilities.

Mollie Smith

P: 707-445-3095

F: 707-445-8743

mollie@coastal-business.com

Digital
Copiers
Printers
Fax

336 First Street
Eureka, CA 95501

www.coastal-business.com
Eureka Redding Chico

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