

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

The next meeting
Thursday October 25, 7:00 p.m.
Woman's Club
1531 J Street
Eureka, California

Pre-Meeting No Host Dinner 5:15
Kyoto , 320 F Street, Eureka
Fixed Menu @ \$25 each (inc. tax,
tip) Alcoholic Beverages extra
Call Nelda, 707-443-8049
so there will be enough seating and Food



Eureka Chapter
American Rhododendron Society

Rhododendrons
in the Redwoods

October 2018

Paths, Walls, Castles and Gardens of Old Japan

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

Ted Kipping started gardening at five - to his mother's astonishment. Ted studied Natural History at Columbia University and then worked at Strybing Arboretum with Pete Sullivan of *Vireya Rhododendron* fame. He also spent time in Japan studying their unique tree shaping disciplines. In 1976 he started his own tree-trimming enterprise called *Tree Shapers* www.treeshapers.com . Since then he has thrown himself into arboriculture. Fascinated by all life forms, it is the large plants which have paid his mortgage. His aim is to do what is best for the trees and plants in order to better enhance the environment.

Ted calls himself a "Terminal Plant Phreak". Ted says that he has been fortunate to visit many areas of the world- both gardens and wild populations. He has learned from both, though wilderness usually trumps gardens for insights into specific plant needs and adaptations. Sharing his knowledge through words and pictures has been another obsession and has also taken him many new places where he has made many new friends. Ted says "Fortunately, the world tends to regard these as "INNOCENT" obsessions and so "I and Thee are still free to pursue them".

Ted says you can skip the 26 hour flight to Japan and join him on a magic carpet to witness "Paths, Walls, Castles and Gardens of Old Japan" . Ted was fortunate to travel to Japan with a group of Japanese Bonsai Masters who shared what they felt was the best of old Japan.

Photos submitted by Ted Kipping



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.



Plant of the Month: *R. rigidum* var. *Album*. A rhododendron species that is quite different from other rhododendrons...mainly because of its stems and leaves. We love *R. rigidum* with its showy purple stems and blue-green leaves. In spring the plant covers itself with ball shaped trusses of pure white flowers. The purplish colored stems make this rhododendron species stand out from others. The foliage is aromatic when rubbed or crushed.

This species is native to northwest Yunnan China, upper Burma, and southeastern Tibet, mostly between 9,000 and 13,000 ft. It will be 5 ft tall and 4 ft wide in 10 years and can live in full sun or partial shade.



The farmer has to be an optimist or he wouldn't still be a farmer.

—Will Rogers (1879–1935)

Your editor fully agrees! I grow cabbages every year optimistically hoping that the slugs, snails, aphids, white cabbage butterflies and root maggots will go to another person's cabbage patch. But, alas, they love my patch. Photo from BonniePlants.com



President's Message

From the historical Riverside Mission Inn in Riverside, California...way down south!

"Hello members of the Eureka Chapter. I have been at the Loma Linda Medical Center for prostate cancer treatment since September 14th. I plan to return by the end of November. I am feeling great and receiving excellent treatment. I know you will have entertaining programs in my absence- certainly you are given a reprieve from my humor! Best to all of you and I look forward to seeing everyone soon."

You may email Max at rudyabe@aol.com

WORD OF THE MONTH: SIMPLE

By Bruce Palmer

This month's word, **SIMPLE** (from the Latin *simplus*, one), is used as an excuse to discuss Rhododendron leaves. The shape and nature of rhodie leaves is one of the features that makes rhododendrons unique. Rhodie leaves are **SIMPLE**, meaning they don't have leaflets like rose leaves. Rhodie leaves are entire, meaning that don't have notches or spikes like holly leaves. Rhodie leaves are longer than broad, unlike the native local plant in Sequoia Park, *Vancouveria hexandra*, the inside-out flower. Rhodie leaves have a petiole (stem); grass leaves do not. Most rhodie leaves are evergreen, meaning that they last two or more years. Many rhodie leaves have trichomes (from the Greek *trichos*, hair), either as hairs on the undersides of leaves or as scales on the undersides of leaves of most of our fragrant rhodies. Finally, most rhodie leaves have two layers of upper epidermal cells that give them that stiff characteristic when compared to most other leaves.



One of the more interesting, lesser known features of rhodie leaves (as well as flowers and stems) is that they are poisonous. Rhododendron was once one of several names for Oleander. We know Oleander is poisonous, but so is Rhododendron, though not usually deadly to humans. The poison grayanotoxin (the name is derived from a Japanese plant *Leucothoe grayana*, named after the great nineteenth century botanist Asa Gray), sometimes called rhodotoxin in rhodies, has bad effects on the nervous system. It is more concentrated in the flowers than the leaves. The military story of defeat of a great Roman army is legendary. In 67 B.C. Pompey the Great was sent from Rome with 1,000 soldiers to finish off a rebellious group of guerilla fighters in the Pontic mountains of what is now Turkey. Local allies of Mithradites left pots of honey made from *Rhododendron ponticum* and *Rhododendron leuteum* for the Romans. The Romans thought that the honey was left as tribute and consumed it, either directly or as mead, and fell into a stupor. The guerillas fell upon the defenseless Romans and massacred them. Pompey later defeated Mithadites, but was certainly set back by the event. There are modern examples as well. A botanist in Inverewe Garden in Scotland licked two drops of rhodie nectar off his hand and became violently ill. People roasting marshmallows with rhodie sticks have gotten stomach aches. Some people, including Nelda, get skin rashes from touching them; Nelda cannot deadhead them without wearing gloves. Most domestic livestock are killed by eating Rhododendron leaves. Oddly, and unfortunately for us, North American deer are not affected. Apparently they have a gut enzyme that disables the poison. Moral of the story: don't eat rhodie leaves, even though they are used as heart medicine in the Himalaya and Turkey and the flowers are sometimes used as food in China.



Three Gold Medal Recipients toast each other's accomplishments with Champagne and great German beer. From left to right, June Walsh, David Banks (ARS Treasurer) and Hartwig Schepker, Director of Rhododendron Park Bremen www.botanika-bremen.de

Your newsletter editor had one of those surprising and completely baffling moments while at the Bremen Germany American Rhododendron Society Convention in May; Mike Stewart, ARS Past President, chose her to rise and come to the front of the room to receive the ARS Gold Medal. It is a goal to which she never aspired, being a draggee as opposed to a Rhodo-holic. After all, she grows cabbages and garlic in her garden. In all her business life she said "never let them see you cry", the whole Rhody convention saw her cry!



ARS German Conventioners Gail Ledbetter, Alma Fletcher (De Anza Chapter), Tim and June Walsh

2018 Gold Medal Citation, June Walsh

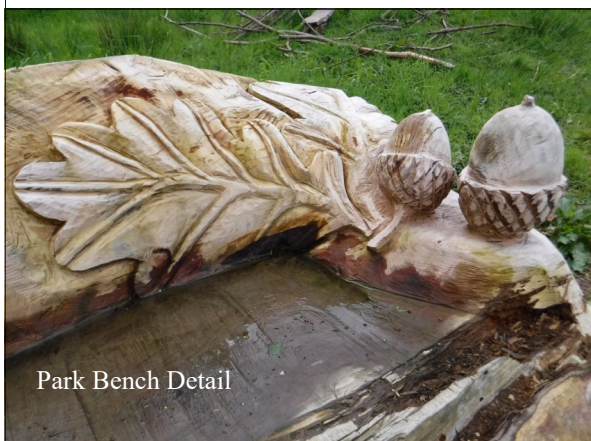
For more than 25 years you have been an active member of the American Rhododendron Society, always exhibiting a warm, welcoming attitude and willingness to serve. Your contributions to the Society have been stellar.

You have been an important factor in the growth and success of the Eureka Chapter, serving as treasurer, membership chair and newsletter editor. At the national level you have served as Secretary to the Society's Board of Directors and you chaired or co-chaired two Western Regional Conferences. You co-chaired the National Convention in 2007 and chaired the National Convention in 2017. You currently serve as National Membership chair.

For these and other significant, lasting contributions, the American Rhododendron Society is proud to present the Gold Medal to June Walsh. May 25, 2018 Bremen Germany.



Zu Jeddoloh Nursery Garden designed by Adrian Bloom



Park Bench Detail



Image: *Feldmaus Microtus arvalis*

Cute but Voracious Voles

Fall is optimum tree and shrub planting time. Planting instructions usually end with the advice to water the new tree or shrub well and then apply an even layer of mulch to conserve soil moisture and regulate soil temperatures. This is great advice—except for when you're planting in a garden with voles!

Voles are small mouse-like animals that enjoy eating many kinds of vegetation. They will gnaw on the bark of young trees and shrubs, creating damage that can leave the plant prone to diseases and stress.

To help prevent vole damage to newly planted trees and shrubs, avoid mulching right up to their trunks or stems. Leaving the ground bare will discourage shy, timid voles because they pre-

fer to tunnel under mulch instead of moving out in the open where they are easily preyed upon by larger mammals and hawks.

Voles, also known as meadow or field mice, have stocky, furry bodies, short legs, and short tails. There are 23 species of voles in the United States, but the two of greatest consequence to gardeners are the meadow and pine voles. **Meadow voles (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*)** have gray to yellow-brown fur with black-tipped hairs and a bicolor tail. They are five and a half to seven and a half inches long. They live mostly above-ground, traveling in one- to two-inch-wide runways in meadows, orchards, and old fields.

Pine voles (*Microtus pinetorum*) have soft, dense, reddish-brown fur, and their undersides are gray, yellow, or cinnamon colored. They can reach a length of four to six inches. Pine voles are subterranean rodents that create extensive networks of underground tunnels. Their typical habitat is the shrubby edge between woods and meadows. This is the vole at the Rhody Hostel and Humboldt Botanical Garden.

Voles do not hibernate. They are active year round, day and night. Furthermore, they breed year round. Gestation periods are only three weeks, and litters can yield up to nine offspring, with the result that vole populations tend to increase rapidly.

SYMPTOMS: It is their prodigious appetite for vegetation that brings voles to the attention of gardeners. Voles feed on both the below and aboveground parts of plants, consuming grasses, seeds, fruit, roots, tubers, and bulbs. Their chisel-like teeth produce irregular patterns of gnaw marks that are about an eighth of an inch wide. The most serious damage they cause is often to the bark of fruit trees and ornamentals, especially during the fall and winter months, when they may girdle and kill even well-established specimens. The damage caused by **meadow voles tends to be above the soil line**, while **pine voles feed underground**.

CONTROL: Hawks, weasels, snakes, and domestic cats are all predators of voles. However, they usually fail to keep vole populations in check. Because voles avoid exposed areas, keeping the grass mowed, removing weeds, and picking up other litter will reduce vole habitats. In other words “a short mown lawn desert.” Protect the trunks of young trees with a cylinder of wire or plastic during the winter months. Pulling the mulch away from the trunk of trees and shrubs will reduce cover for voles.

The surest way to protect tulips, crocuses, and other valuable bulbs is to plant them inside a wire-mesh box made of hardware cloth.

Snap-type mouse traps can be used to trap voles in the fall and late winter. Bait the trap with a peanut butter-oatmeal mixture on the underside of the trigger and place it perpendicular to a burrow opening or at the bottom of a runway. Cover it with an inverted nursery pot. It's very important that the trap be dark and that it operate freely. Set traps at 10-foot intervals and check them daily. Reset them until no voles are caught over a one-week period.

Don Wallace owner of Singing Tree Gardens, and Eureka Chapter member, tells me that he has seldom seen vole damage on Rhododendrons, the Rhody Hostel gardener agrees. PLANT MORE RHODODENDRONS!

Source: <http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7439.html>

Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org>

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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Future Programs

October 25, 2018

Paths, Walls, Castles and Gardens Ted Kipping
Of Old Japan

November

No Meeting, Enjoy Thanksgiving with Family and Friends

December 6, 2018

Holiday Potluck

January 24, 2019

Japanese Azaleas in the Wild

Atsuko Gibson

February 28, 2019

Plant Exploring in China

Glen Jameison

March 28, 2019

Exploring Soils

James Cassiday

April 25, 2019

Gardens of Seattle

Don Wallace

April 26, 27, 28, 2019

Rhododendron Show and Sale

May 23, 2019

Member's Mini Show, Let us See Your Bloomers

June 2, 2019

Members' Gardens Tour and Potluck Picnic



Tim Walsh, Mary,
Don Wallace,
Verne and Paula
Trinoskey enjoy
the September
potluck.
Joe Bonino's photo

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