

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

## Eureka Chapter

**The next meeting, IN-PERSON!**  
**Thursday October 27, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Woman's Club**  
**1531 J Street, Eureka CA**



Eureka Chapter  
American Rhododendron Society

Rhododendrons  
in the Redwoods

**October 2022**

**Three Wild Gardens and a Glass House**

*The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet on Thursday, October 27, 2022. The meeting and program will be held at the Eureka Woman's Club 1531 J Street in Eureka beginning at 7:00 P.M. Refreshments will be served. Masks are optional.*

Dennis Bottemiller, sort of retired from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, will be the Eureka Chapter's guest speaker, his topic is "Three Wild Gardens and a Glasshouse".

Dennis says, "This is the story of my return to gardening after retiring from my nursery responsibilities at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden. I managed the nursery for about 25 years within the setting of the botanical garden, but the nursery left little time to do the creative gardening that I love.

I retained a part time position as Curator of the Rutherford Conservatory at RSBG and for a short time after retirement, gardening in the conservatory was enough. Then, other opportunities came along, and I am now shaping two more gardens in a style similar to the RSBG – Wild Woodland gardens! In this presentation I will show scenes from all three gardens (and the glass-house) and talk about how I see things in a garden built within the forest to make it look as if the garden were part of the forest itself. My goal in the woodland is to use the plants we all love, (rhododendrons!) within the natural setting of the Northwest native forest with lots of vignetting and view directing toward native forest features.

With this talk I hope to inspire greater use of the natural features inherent in garden spaces large or small to appreciate and incorporate the abundance of interesting features of the natural world into the garden setting."

*Photos submitted  
by Dennis  
Bottemiller*



*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– Deciduous

By Bruce Palmer



R. 'Loderi Venus' about to shed last year's leaves

No, your rhodies are not dying. If you have been growing rhododendrons for years you will know that every fall many rhododendrons drop older leaves as if they were **deciduous**; it's part of what gives rhodies their attractive rounded shape. **DECIDUOUS** is this month's word, appropriately for autumn. The word comes from the Latin *decidere*, to fall off. Unlike rhododendrons, many broad-leaved trees in temperate climates drop all their leaves as the days grow shorter and the efficiency of photosynthesis diminishes. As daylength grows shorter and temperatures begin to drop, **deciduous** plants reabsorb the chlorophyll for future use but leave the small amounts of red, orange and yellow accessory pigments (a topic for future words) behind, often displaying a spectacular array of fall colors. When the production of

sugars decreases, **deciduous** plants recycle the parts of chlorophyll molecules that are reusable, primarily the magnesium, an element uncommon in earth's soil. (An obscure fact about chlorophyll and hemoglobin is that the active parts of both molecules differ only in that chlorophyll contains magnesium and the hemoglobin in your blood contains iron as the active element).

When the leaves are no longer photosynthesizing it doesn't pay a plant to keep its non-functioning parts, so it sheds them. A scar layer forms at the base of the leaf that blocks further transport of materials to and from the leaf and the leaf drops off. Well, usually the leaves drop off

in the fall. Not always, though. In oak trees and some other **deciduous** trees, the leaves hang on in a wrinkled brown state until the new buds push them off in the spring. The term for this, which our newsletter editor June Walsh sent me several weeks ago, is marcescence (Latin *marcare*, to wither or decay). Such **deciduous** trees are sometimes called everciduous.

Rhododendrons and redwoods share the characteristic that in autumn they shed older, less efficient leaves as if the plants were **deciduous**. This time of year we are plagued by what we call the "redwood rain". Most older redwood leaves drop off and cover everything in a thick layer, requiring us to blow off our roofs and driveway. Many of our rhodies lose old leaves also, but that leads to the attractive rounded shape we admire in our gardens.

Redwood about to shed leaves to begin the "Redwood Rain"

Photos by Bruce Palmer



Maple Acer 'Bloodgood' showing accessory pigments





“Trees are sanctuaries. Whoever knows how to speak to them, whoever knows how to listen to them, can learn the truth. They do not preach learning and precepts, they preach, undeterred by particulars, the ancient law of life. Trees are sanctuaries. Whoever knows how to speak to them, whoever knows how to listen to them, can learn the truth. They do not preach learning and precepts, they preach, undeterred by particulars, the ancient law of life.” Herman Hesse (1877—1962)

To read his entire essay on trees click here [https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/1113469.Hermann\\_Hesse](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/1113469.Hermann_Hesse)

### **Growing Stagecoach Hill *Rhododendron occidentale* in Missouri!**

Eureka and Azalea Chapters member Rick Edwards has been on a quest to grow Western Azalea *Rhododendron occidentale* that he remembers from his childhood home in California in his adopted home in Cedarcreek, Missouri.

His correspondents in passion are Mike McCullough (De Anza Chapter), Mitch Mortvedt (Azalea Chapter) and Mike Creel (Southeastern Chapter). Only Mike McCullough lives where the Western Azaleas grow natively and has made it part of his life's work to find and document where they are growing in the wild, including at Stagecoach Hill in Humboldt County, CA.

In August 2022 Rick reported on his successes and failures: “I still have several plants from the first batch of seed sown in December of 2017. Those plants have been through a lot! I have had good success with seedlings with lots of 2 year olds, and yearlings.

We have finally broken the miserably hot pattern that has been here since the last part of June. We were in the upper 80s and a couple days in the low 90s--our normal temperatures. We even had a couple of good rains and due to the extreme drought conditions, we had some local flash flooding!

One notable surprise was that I lost very few occidentale! I made sure none of the occi received direct sun after 10:30am. Some of the days when the temps were over 102, I ran the sprinklers shorter time periods during the afternoons just to cool the temperatures in the microenvironments of the pots. That routine really made a big difference in temperatures and surviving the heat stress.

I have found that using a good potting soil (both ProMix and MiracleGro) mixed with perlite at a 60/40 ratio soil/perlite has been the best balance for growing occi. I will plant several in the ground this fall. I have large shrubs and trees growing in strategic locations to provide the sun blockage and quality of shade the occi do best in.

Of all the seed grown material, everything, including Stagecoach Hill, has done well, except the Oregon seed. I think this shows there is definite genetic adaptation to climate and water requirements. I am surprised how well the Stagecoach Hill seedlings have done. I have some 2 yr old plants that are almost as big as the original 4 yr olds! Occi is definitely slower growing than any other azalea species in North America. Everyone who has grown the seed has made some comment about that. It is definitely my experience.”

*Rick Edwards submitted photo of Rhododendron occidentale. Stagecoach Hill seedlings.*



**Plant of the Month:**

Rhododendron 'Cherries and Merlot' – New from Frank Fujioka, the master hybridizer of Whidbey Island, WA. For the foliage lovers, this unique hybrid has rich red coloration on the undersides of the leaves. It has been suggested that one should plant this one up on a bank or mound so the red color on the undersides of the leaves can be easily seen. The flowers are red, and the plant will bloom in April on a plant that will be 4 ft tall and a bit wider in 10 years. It is a nice compact plant that will be the star of your garden!

*Text and photo by Don Wallace*



Photo Credit: Ekaterina Kondratova/Shutterstock

**Mulled Apple Cider**

From The Old Farmer's Almanac October 14, 2022  
During apple season, enjoy a cup of Mulled Apple Cider. "Mulled" simply means that the cider is heated with spices. It's similar to steeping tea. Plus, it fills the house with a delicious fragrance.

If possible, use unpasteurized apple cider for best taste. Adults may add bourbon or rum if desired. Just pour a tablespoon into an empty mug and pour the mulled cider on top.

**Ingredients**

- 1 gallon apple cider
- 8 to 10 whole cloves
- 3 cinnamon sticks, broken into pieces
- 1 lemon or orange, sliced crosswise
- 2-inch piece fresh ginger, cut into thin slices (optional)

**Instructions**

In a large stainless steel or enameled pot, combine all ingredients. Slowly bring just to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes.

Strain mixture through a fine sieve into a heat-proof pitcher or serving bowl and serve warm.

*Editor's note: Humboldt County has long been famous for its variety of apples including those developed by Albert Etter ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert\\_Etter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Etter)). The local farmers' markets have apples available, your friends and neighbors probably have apples to share and several local apple growers press apples for juice and cider. Enjoy the season!*





## Robert Dennison Schorer, 1944-2022

Eureka Chapter member, Robert passed away June 5 peacefully at home with love of 43 years, Lee Astrino, at his side after a brief illness.

Robert was born March 25 in Boise the eldest of six children. His early years were spent in Utah and North Las Vegas before the family settled in Orange County. After graduating from Western High School he worked as a dog groomer, then joined the Army, where he learned to operate a printing press. After his discharge he became a letter carrier for the USPS. A serious mishap occurred in which both of his ankles were shattered and steel plates were implanted, He was told he would never walk again. After a year of hard work he did walk

and was placed on a disability retirement. He then worked for a small weekly magazine. While there he was invited to a pre-theater cocktail party, where he met the man who would become the love of his life.

In 1986 Robert, Lee and their two dogs, Killer and Princess, moved to their “temporary” home in Eureka, while planning to build their new home. It never was built.

Robert worked for Noel’s TV and Appliance in the video department, then Globe Imports, then the Daly’s Department Store until it closed, and then Henderson Center Pharmacy/ Redwood Pharmacy until they closed, and decided to devote himself to keeping a spotless home. He loved to walk and work out in his home gym and play Pinochle. For over 10 years he elaborately decorated their home for the Christmas Open House. He sent cards to every family member and close friends without fail.

One of his happiest moments occurred on October 13, 2013 when he and Lee exchanged vows in front of many of their dearest friends.

He was preceded in death by Ervin (father) Schorer and Josephine (mother) and his brothers Rolland and Ervin Jr Shorer and his sister Diane. He is survived by his brother Leslie Schorer and Norme Morgan (David), and his love, Lee Astorino, and many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date. Donations can be sent to Hospice.



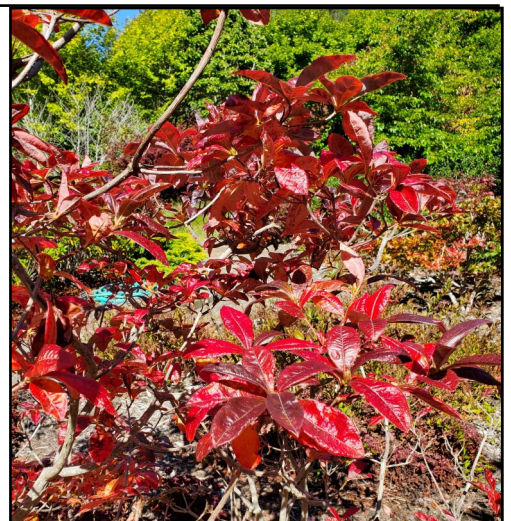
Fall Color at Humboldt Botanical Garden’s Moss Family

Temperate Woodland Garden.

Left, *Stewartia pseudocamellia*

Right, Exbury Azalea ‘Cannon’s Double’

Photos June Walsh



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](mailto:RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net)

Membership information and applications are available from Ellen Gill. [Htg1anderg@suddenlink.net](mailto:Htg1anderg@suddenlink.net)

Eureka Chapter is a member of the **Humboldt Botanical Gardens**, 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](http://www.EurekaRhody.org)



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## Future Programs

*The Eureka Chapter is ready to welcome its members and guests back to the Eureka Woman's Club for in-person meetings. The Eureka Chapter Telephone-tree callers will be on the phone to keep you up-to-date with anything new. Tell them thank you for their calls!*

*October 27, 2022 7:00 Dennis Bottemiller, Three Wild Gardens and a Glasshouse  
Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden*

*November no meeting, Give thanks for your family and friends*

*December 1, 2022 6:00 Holiday Potluck and short educational program*

*January 26, 2023, 7:00 Christy Hartsell, Growing Vireya Rhododendrons*

*February 23, 2023 7:00 Tim Walsh, Garden Travels*

*March 23, 2023 7:00 Glen Jamieson, World Travels*

*April 27, 2023 7:00 To be Announced*

*April 28, 2023 Rhododendron Show and Sale, location to be determined*

*May 25, 2023 6:00 Members' Mini Show and Potluck*

*June 4, 2023 Garden Tour, Bring-your-own-picnic*

*All programs subject to change*

## 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 all members are welcome, call or email June Walsh 707-443-0604, [rhodyhostel@suddenlink.net](mailto:rhodyhostel@suddenlink.net)