

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

Pre Meeting Dinner

5:15 p.m.

Gallagher's, in the Eagle House
139 2nd Street, Old Town
Reservation is required
call Lynne at (707) 362-1796

The next meeting,
Thursday April 24th 7:00 pm
Eureka Woman's Club
1531 J Street, Eureka CA



Eureka Chapter
American Rhododendron Society

Rhododendrons
in the Redwoods

April 2025

All the Way From Brittany, FRANCE

The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet on Thursday, April 24, 2025. The meeting and program will be held at the Eureka Woman's Club 1531 J Street in Eureka beginning at 7:00 p.m.



Our April speaker is Marc Colombel, who last visited us via Zoom in March 2021 and before that he was a guest speaker at the American Rhododendron Society International Convention hosted by the Eureka Chapter in 2017. Marc was awarded the **ARS Silver Medal** in 2008 and the **ARS Gold Medal** in 2024. The Gold Medal citation reads “Marc Colombel is a long-time ARS member and an enthusiastic rhododendron hybridizer, having created nearly 1500 crosses and registering his first hybrid in 1992. In 1993 he published “Rhododendrons: Mode d’emploi” and created the Société Bretonne du Rhododendron, of which he was the president for 14 years. In 1996 he launched a French rhododendron website to share his knowledge and in 2000, he organized the first rhododendron show in France.

He has authored some 200 articles and has been a frequent knowledgeable and humorous speaker both in Europe and America. He recently created the Polyploid Rhododendron Conservatory in Josselin, France, to which he donates nearly one hundred polyploid hybrids annually,”

You can visit Marc’s web site www.rhododendron.fr to see his hybrids and information on rhododendron propagation and polyploidy which is the inheritable condition of possessing more than two complete sets of chromosomes.

Marc is a very entertaining speaker, come make him welcome, though French is his home language his English is superb.

Plant of the Month

By Don Wallace



Rhododendron 'Bretonne'

Rhododendron 'Bretonne' came to us from Marc Colombel in France. This nice 'yak' hybrid has a light lavender-pink flower on a compact handsome plant. The plant is easy to grow and will be one of the most attractive foliage plants in your garden.

At Singing Tree Gardens Nursery we put this cultivar into the rare category as we are the exclusive source of the plant. Marc creates some of the best rhododendrons available today, and since we have had this one in our garden for over 15 years, we know it is special. It is hard to root, so few are made available every year. Marc Colombel will be our speaker this month, so I wanted to honor him by making his hybrid the plant of the month.

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.

www.EurekaRhody.org

Words of the Month– Plasmodesmata & Syncytium

“plaz·mow·dez·maa·tuh” and “sin sish she um ”

By ARS Gold Medal Recipient Bruce Palmer

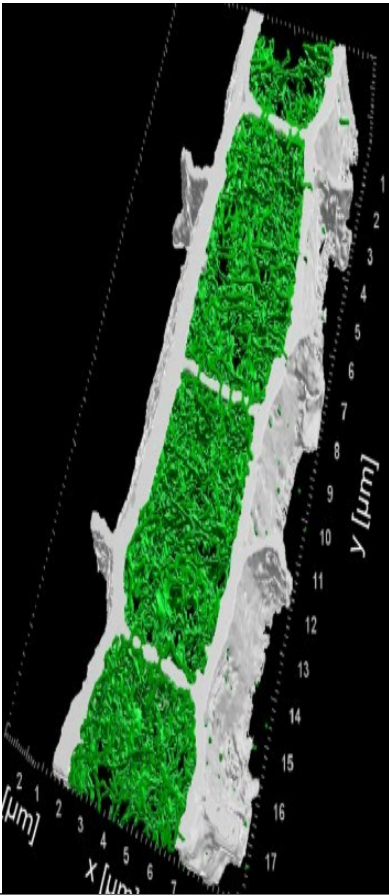
This month we have two words for the price of one: **Plasmodesmata** (Greek: *plamos*, that which is formed; Greek: *desmos*, chain) and **Syncytium** (Greek: *syn*, together; Greek: *kytos*, hollow or space; Latin: *ium*, quality or nature of). Both words are related to the formation of leaves and flowers in vascular plants in springtime.

All cells have a soft, semi-permeable membrane surrounding the active internal contents. Plant cells do too, but higher plants such as trees and shrubs have solid cellulose walls surrounding cells and their membranes. The stiff cell walls allow the trees and shrubs to stand upright, but they create a serious problem. Whereas the soft, thin cell membrane can allow the passage of materials into and out of the cell, the thick, stiff cellulose walls cannot. In springtime, more than at other seasons, large quantities of building molecules are needed to form leaves and flowers. How to get them through the impermeable cell walls in the vascular network? The answer lies in the formation of **Plasmodesmata**. Plasmodesmata are openings between cells which have neither cell walls nor membranes. We remember from elementary school that cells create new cells, copies of themselves, by duplicating their DNA, then dividing the duplicates, then finally re-forming cell membranes and, in vascular plants, cell walls to create separate cells.

Without getting into major details involving several more words, what happens is that the complete separation of cells is prevented and the tissues end up as a single cell with multiple DNA- containing nuclei.

We call a large cell with multiple nuclei, a **Syncytium**. We learned that a cell typically has one nucleus containing the DNA that controls the formation of the proteins that carry out cell functions. That's accurate, but there are numerous examples of syncytia in living organisms. Mostly they not only do not harm the organism containing them, but facilitate functions such as transportation of materials in plants and muscle actions in animals. The formation of **plasmodesmata** in the vascular tissues of higher plants (see the illustration) causes the formation of **syncytia** which allow raw materials to get to leaves and finished molecules to get from the leaves to the rest of the plant. Useful **syncytia** in the human body include skeletal and heart muscles, allowing synchronized contractions of entire muscles rather than separate actions of each cell.

There are, though, harmful examples of **syncytia**. The one that comes to mind right away is the RSV virus, the Respiratory Syncytial Virus. The virus clumps cells in the lungs together to form a syncytium which interferes with breathing. Luckily, we have a vaccine against it. So, from slime molds though most fungi to vascular plants, we are surrounded by **syncytia** and in our beloved rhodies **plasmodesmata** are currently forming to help **syncytia** bring construction materials to new leaves.



PLASMODESMATA

(green lines between cells)

NEW PROJECT FOR JERRY REYNOLDS SCHOLARSHIP

Since severing our relationship with Cal Poly Humboldt's Journalism department and the scholarship to honor Jerry Reynolds, the Eureka Chapter board has been looking for a new project to honor Jerry and his legacy for learning, teaching and mentoring. After the February member program by Cyril Oberlander's (Dean of Cal Poly Humboldt Library) presentation on their 3-D herbarium, the board voted to award the remaining scholarship money to this exciting project.

News Release:

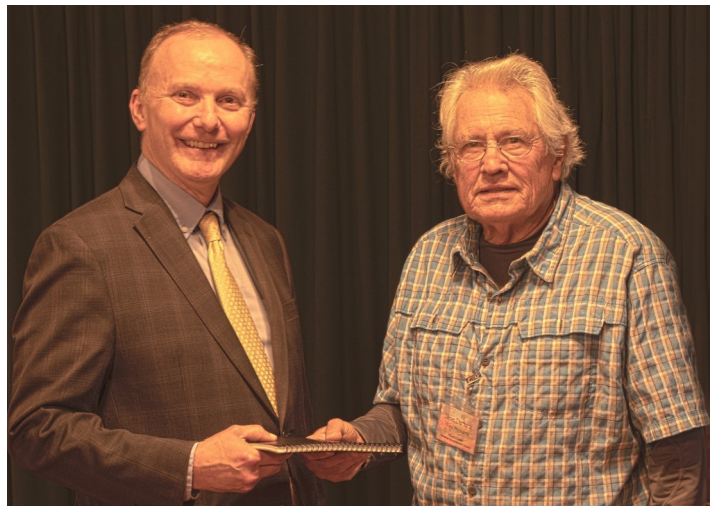
On March 27th the Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society awarded \$1,500 to Cal Poly Humboldt Library. Cyril Oberlander, Library Dean, sincerely appreciates this generous funding that will support student employment for the **3D Digital Herbarium Project**. The Herbaria project is an open-source software developed by students at Cal Poly Humboldt to leverage 3D models to update a system of cataloging pressed flowers and plants. This innovative approach uses photogrammetry, a series of photographs mosaicked, to create a virtual, 3D image.

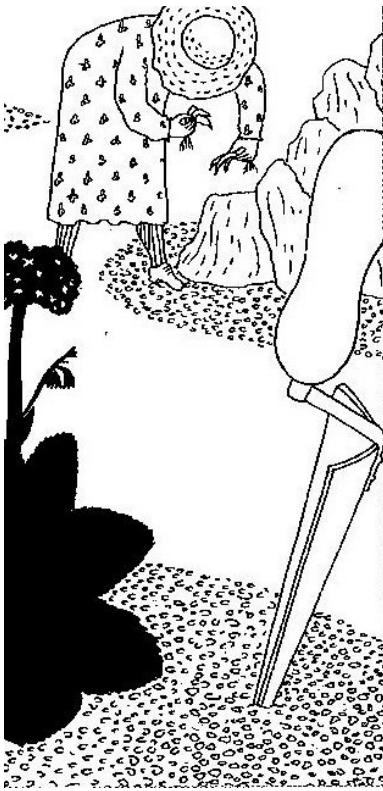
In the past, new species of plants were represented in a catalog of pressed and dried clippings that were difficult to compare to the actual plant both by shape and color. Using existing applications, the projection of a plant species can be viewed in a 3D space that represents the shape and color of the original plant on the web at 3dherbarium.org and also viewed in augmented and virtual realities. Historically, taxonomists, plant breeders, ecologists, and climate scientists visited Herbaria in universities and special libraries around the world to study the plants that have been pressed and preserved for science. Many herbaria are specialized and must be visited in person which is often not possible. The new 3D herbaria being developed at Cal Poly will allow interested parties from all over the world to digitally review and study plants that have been scanned as well as make contributions to the database. Botany students are authoring annotations to the 3D Digital Herbarium, sharing their insights about botany and the specimens. More information about the project and a demonstration of the new Herbaria can be had by contacting Cal Poly Humboldt Library at (707) 826-3441.

Since 1991, Eureka Rhody has been involved in the planning, constructing, planting, supporting, and caring for Humboldt Botanical Garden at College of the Redwoods. In 2017, Eureka Rhody hosted a convention of rhododendron experts and enthusiasts from around the world. The funds raised through the convention were used to fund and plant a garden behind the Hospice of Humboldt's patient facilities and to continue to care for the growing garden. Eureka Rhody also made a major contribution to the Eureka Woman's Club through its donation and installation of a large screen for projection programs and new speakers to improve the sound of amplified programs.

See page 4 of the April 2022 Eureka Rhody newsletter to learn more about the Jerry Reynolds Scholarship <https://eukearhody.org/newsletters/2022/2022%20Eureka%20Chapter%20Newsletter%20-%20April.pdf>

At Right, Steve Lemke's photo of Cyril Oberlander and Eureka Rhody VP Steve Durhan.





A man of words and not of deeds is like a garden full of weeds



Marc Colombel's *Rhododendron* 'Rwain' is a triploid

The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society Presents

Spring Plant Sale

One Day Only

1 gal size AZALEAS & RHODODENDRONS

Saturday, April 26th, 2025



**Pacific View Charter School
115 Henderson Street, Eureka
Saturday Only 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
May close earlier if plants are sold out
707-845-1553 FOR UPDATE.**



The Meeting Plant Raffle

One of the highlights of the Eureka Chapter's monthly meetings is the plant raffle. Generally, there are around 12 unique plants in the raffle, with most being rhododendrons, but on occasion there are heathers, azaleas, and some unusual perennials. Few, if not all, will be found at the local nurseries, so are very collectible. It is definitely a reason to attend the meetings, and winners are always grinning ear to ear. The meetings can be attended on the 4th Thursday of the month, usually starting at 7 p.m., unless a pot luck is on the agenda, which means a 6 p.m. start up. The meetings are held at the Eureka Woman's Club, 1531 J St. in Eureka. So, please come and buy some raffle tickets and you may walk away with a very rare and unusual plant.

A.Word.A.Day with Anu Garg

Everyone likes going places. One might call it a vacation, another a holiday, and some just call it escaping the inbox. But what if your travel plans were dictated by the literal meaning of the word? Here's what your itinerary would look like, etymologically speaking:

- **journey:** A day trip (from French jour: day). About 20 miles max in those days
- **travel:** Torture (Latin trepaliare: to torture). Because travel in those days wasn't exactly a trip to Disneyland
- **holiday:** Perhaps a pilgrimage, because holiday is, literally, holy day. Well, you could worship the sun
- **pilgrimage:** A foreign trip (Latin peregrinus: foreign)
- **visit:** Go see a place (Latin videre: to see). So if you attend a concert, would that be an audit? (Latin audire: to hear)
- **trip:** Dancing in the backyard (Old French triper: to hop, skip, leap, dance)
- **vacation:** Vacate the home? Also, the wallet? (Latin vacare: to be empty)
- **tour.** Spinning in circles? (Greek tornos: lathe) **Don't miss the June 1st Eureka Rhody Garden Tour!**

Good thing etymology isn't destiny. A word is not limited to its roots or what it meant originally.

Eureka Chapter/American Rhododendron Society

2050 Irving Drive, Eureka CA 95503

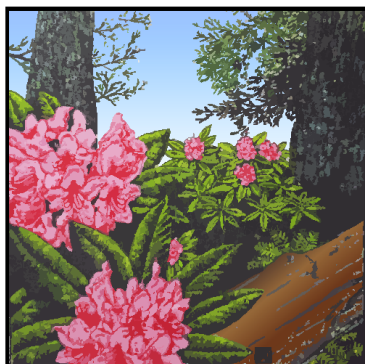
Eureka Chapter Newsletter is published monthly except during July, August and November.

Submissions from members are encouraged and should be sent to June Walsh, Newsletter Editor, by email RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net

Membership information and applications are available from Ellen Gill, rhody4erg@gmail.com

Eureka Chapter is a member of the **Humboldt Botanical Garden**, Eureka, CA and **The Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden**, Federal Way, WA.

Eureka Chapter is a chapter of the American Rhododendron Society a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization.



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Future Programs

The Eureka Chapter meets at the Eureka Woman's Club, 1531 J Street, Eureka CA.

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!

April 24, 2025 Marc Colombel, from Brittany, France!

April 26, 2025 Eureka Rhody Plant Sale - in Eureka

May 2-3, 2025 Humboldt Botanical Garden Plant Sale - at the garden

May 22, 2025 Member Mini Show - Let us see your bloomers!

Date Change:

June 1, 2025 4 splendid Member Gardens to Tour and Potluck Picnic

All programs subject to change, but what in life isn't?



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 7 p.m., all members are welcome, call or email June Walsh RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net or 707-443-0604