

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

Pre-Meeting Dinner 5:15 p.m.
Pachanga Mexicana
1802 5th St. in Eureka
Reservation required
Call Lynne 707-362-1796

The next meeting,
Thursday October 23, 7:00 p.m.
Woman's Club
1531 J Street, Eureka CA
Eureka, California



Eureka Chapter
American Rhododendron Society

Rhododendrons
in the Redwoods

October 2025

Gisele ("G") Schoniger, Soil Health

The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet on Thursday, October 23, 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.

Gisele "G" Schoniger is Manager and Organic Gardening Educator at Kellogg Garden Products. In her long career in the Garden Industry, Gisele has accumulated a wide range of experience and knowledge. She earned her degree in Ornamental Horticulture from California Polytechnic University in San Luis Obispo. She has owned an Interiorscape company, worked for the State Department of Agriculture, practiced as a horticultural therapist with senior citizens, and launched an outstanding sales career by helping establish top-selling organic gardening products. "G" will share her wealth of gardening wisdom as an educator to the industry and consumers all across the West. Her workshops are ***upbeat, educational and entertaining.***

Ms. Schoniger's program will be: **"Soil as a Living Organism."** If you've heard that a successful garden starts with good soil, you've been given good advice! Soil is a complex ecosystem, which supports all life on earth. But what is "good" soil and how do you know if you have it? Learn the basics of how to build and care for healthy soil in your landscape using natural and organic materials. You be rewarded with abundant crops and beautiful landscapes, but also the feeling of making a difference in the garden-at-large, on this this beautiful earth we all share.

She promises that you will be thrilled to have come to hear her program and to take away new knowledge, and you will receive a gift from "G" and Kellogg!

Submitted photo



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Rhododendron 'Leonardslee' at HBG



R. arboreum 'Leonardslee'



Rhododendron 'Rubaiyat' at HBG

Plant of the Month: The 'Leonardslee' form of *Rhododendron arboreum*.

By Don Wallace, ARS Silver Medal Honoree and owner of Singing Tree Gardens Nursery

There are several named forms of *R. arboreum*, with one of most distinctive being *R. arboreum* ssp. *arboreum* 'Leonardslee'. We received our first cuttings many years ago from Dr. Paul Anderson, whose garden we often toured in the spring. This rhododendron grows to around 10 ft. tall and has long, narrow, dark-green leaves with bright silver plastered indumentum. Like many other members of this species, the leaves hang almost vertically, giving the plant a look that some don't like. However, the silver indumentum is more easily seen, and as one gets used to this plant's form, it becomes a favorite. The flowers appear in February and are very lovely. Full ball trusses of very light pink with darker edges are often called 'picotee' by some. Two of these were planted at the Humboldt Botanical Garden and will be in full bloom in late winter, so be sure to go and take a look.

Editor's note: Humboldt Botanical Garden also has Rhododendron arboreum 'RSBG Best Pink' and nearby Rhododendron arboreum 'Rubaiyat', which is a clear red and blooms in January.

Fall Color and Blooms at Humboldt Botanical Garden

Fall in the Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden at Humboldt Botanical Garden brings new colors and blooms after the exuberance of Spring and Summer. The deciduous trees, magnolias, maples, dogwoods, red bud, *Styrax* and *Stewartia* color their leaves in yellows, browns, and brilliant reds before shedding them for winter to show their beautiful naked branches and trunks. The *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*, Japanese Katsura, wafts the fragrance of burnt sugar through the garden as its leaves fall.

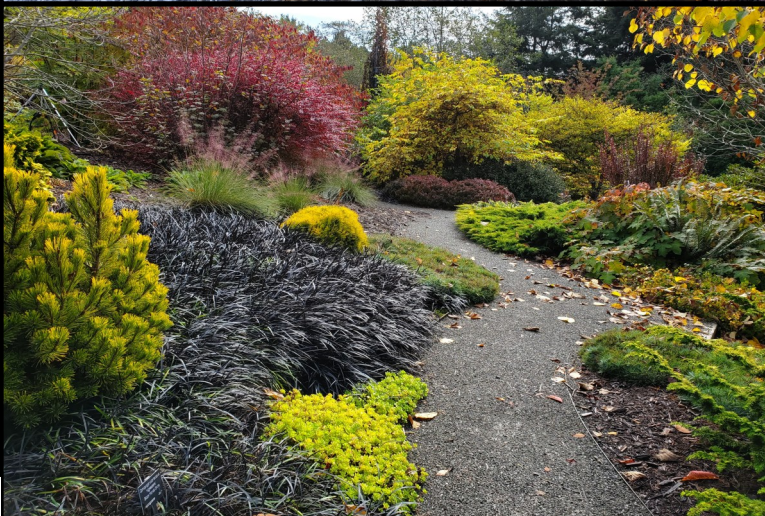
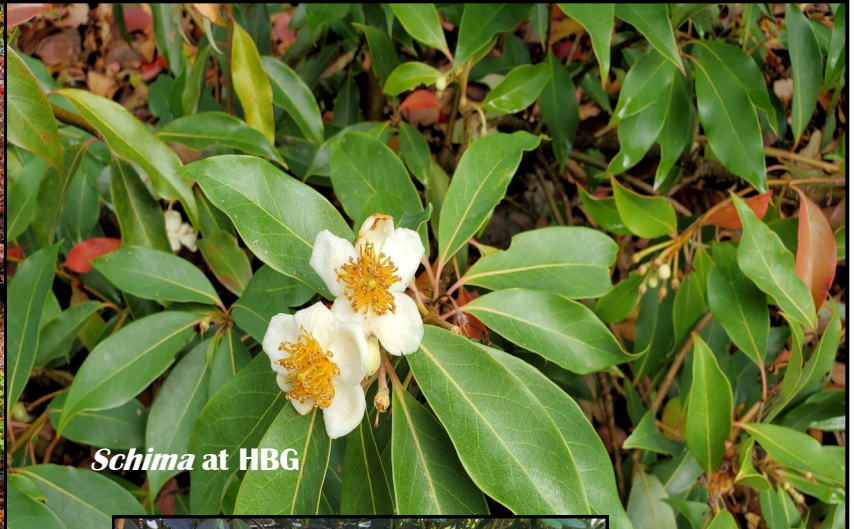
The *Rhododendron arboreum* 'Leonardslee' will begin to relax its leaves to hang vertically, showing their silver backs. The leaves will continue in this relaxed mode until the flowers emerge in March.

Continued on next page....

The large leaves of *Rhododendron falconeri* ssp. *eximium* will be shedding their woolly coat of cinnamon indumentum through the rainy season. In spring the new leaves will stand tall and cinnamon brown.

Winter blooms of *Camellia sasanqua*, *Polyspora*, *Schima*, Encore and Satsuki azaleas, *Rhododendron kiusianum*, and fragrant *Luculia* will brighten a rainy day.

June Walsh is co-curator of the Moss Temperate Woodland Garden.



WORD OF THE MONTH: LENTICEL

Article Reprinted from March 2016 Eureka Chapter Newsletter

By Bruce Palmer, ARS Gold Medal Honoree

Features in the bark of deciduous trees are more visible in winter. I noticed the prominent **LENTICELS** in the bark of one of our flowering cherries (*Prunus* ‘Akebono’ –left illustration) a few days ago and thought that would be a good word for this month. **LENTICEL** is from the Latin *lenticella*, a small window. **LENTICELS** are not always as obvious as they are on cherry trees, but they are present in the bark of woody plants in general. We’ve seen in previous monthly words that stomata on the undersides of leaves allow and control the movement of oxygen, carbon dioxide and water into and out of leaves. Generally speaking, woody stems do not photosynthesize, but the live cells in woody stems do carry on respiration. That means that oxygen and water need to get into the stems, and carbon dioxide, and water need to get out. The bark acts as a protective layer that should prevent the flow of any liquid or gas in either direction. That would be fatal to the living cells in the outer layers of the stems. Woody plants have developed soft, spongy areas in the bark, **LENTICELS**, that allow gases to pass through between living cells and the exterior, thus solving the problem. Rhododendrons have **LENTICELS**, but often they are not as obvious as those in cherries. The bark of *Rhododendron* ‘Alice Eastwood’ in our yard shows **LENTICELS** in abundance (right illustration). It shows also the second meaning of the word **LENTICEL**, little lens. Most **LENTICELS** are lens shaped, though it isn’t always obvious. That may be why they were assigned that name originally.

LENTICELS are not confined to the bark of woody plants. Fruits such as apples and pears, tubers such as potatoes, and storage roots such as carrots have living cells, so they require gas exchange with the environment and have **LENTICELS**. The **LENTICELS** on the potato in the center illustration are not clearly lens-shaped, but there is a row of seven of them at the bottom right of the photo that are. To carry on respiration in the stems of woody plants, a nice solution to the problem of needing to be nearly impervious to the outside environment while needing gas exchange for the living cells has been solved by the presence of **LENTICELS**. Neat, effective solution! (Bruce Palmer’s photos)



LENTICELS IN THE BARK
OF A FLOWERING CHERRY,
Prunus ‘Akebono’

LENTICELS IN THE SKIN
OF A POTATO

LENTICELS IN THE BARK
OF *Rhododendron* ‘Alice Eastwood’



Pacific Tree Frog, Ellen Gill's picture in her rhododendron May 2025

Pseudacris regilla, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_tree_frog

*A book is a garden
carried in the pocket.
—Arabian proverb*

*The trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky.*

—William Butler Yeats, Irish poet (1865–1939)

FREE Rhododendron

For **Renewing** Eureka Chapter Members.

NEW members also get a FREE plant!

Eureka Rhody member Jean Durbin has donated some nice companion plants to enliven your garden.

To make an appointment to shop till you drop call June at 707-498-2337 or email at RhodyHostel@gmail.com

September 17, 2025

Note and picture from Darci Short and Frank Bickner

“We are in Halifax for the day. We have walked all through the hub of the city and ventured through a public garden. That’s where this photo was taken. There are older rhodies in this area. They make us think ponticum but they could be any hardy Rhody.

We are having fun exploring the region. Everyone is so kind and sort of ‘down home.’ No one’s invited us to dinner yet, but it seems like a thing they’d do.”

Editor’s note: Tim and I were in Nova Scotia for the ARS Conference in June 2025, but did not go to the beautiful park in downtown Halifax where Darci and Frank saw this floral display.



Eureka Chapter/American Rhododendron Society

2050 Irving Drive, Eureka CA 95503-7022

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

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

Membership information and applications are available from Ellen Gill at 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.

www.EurekaRhody.org



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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!

October 23, 2025

Gisele 'G' Schoniger

Soil Health

November

Happy Thanksgiving

December 4, 2025

Holiday Potluck and Rhody 101

Happy New Year

January 22, 2026

Mike Bones

Bone-sai!!!!

February 26, 2026

Kathy Kosta

What is Killing my Plant?

March 26, 2026

Don Wallace

*SIX Steps to Success Growing
Rhododendrons*

April 23, 2026

Marie Antoine

What is that stuff in my Rhodo?

May 28, 2026

Member Mini-Show and Potluck

June 7, 2026

Member Garden Tour and Potluck Picnic

"A friendship can weather most things and thrive in thin soil; but it needs a little mulch of letters and phone calls and small, silly presents every so often-just to save it from drying out completely." Pam Brown

Eureka Chapter Officers and Board Members

If you are interested in Board member contact information or attending a board meeting, call or email June Walsh 707-498-2337 RhodyHostel@gmail.com. Board meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. All members are welcome.