

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

# Eureka Chapter

*The next meeting*  
**Thurs. September 26, 7:00 p.m.**  
*Woman's Club*  
*1531 J Street Eureka, California*

*Pre-Meeting*  
**Potluck Dinner**  
**6:00**



Newly fledged Pacific tree frog, quarter of an inch size. Walsh's pond

September 2013

## Orchids for the People

The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society starts its 2013-2014 Rhododendron season with **Blaine Maynor** owner and head plant geek at Orchids for the People.

The **September 26th** meeting will begin at **6:00 PM with a POTLUCK** so bring **potluck main dishes, sides, veg, salads and desserts**. Coffee, tea and juice will be provided; bring wine/beer to share if you like. All tableware will be provided.

This will also be the first meeting at which **dues renewals** may be made. Your newsletter has a stamped envelope for your renewal, or save the stamp and bring your renewal to the meeting.

**At 7:00 PM Blaine Maynor's** program will be, "**Orchids: What they are and how to grow them.**" He will also have 15 - 20 blooming plants for sale after his program; and one for the raffle.

Blaine was hooked by orchids at an early age. His maternal grandfather in Ojai had pots of cymbidium orchids growing next to cacti and succulents. He was equally captivated by these very different kinds of plants. But not until taking a pollination biology class at HSU did the orchid fever hit him hard.

Blaine was fascinated by how incredibly diverse the flowering orchid plant family was - growing in every part of the world except for on glaciers and in the ocean. Orchids have coevolved with different critters to get the job of pollination done, but some say that orchids have worked their best magic on people.

Blaine has owned and operated Orchids for the People for 13 years. The business caters to the orchid curious and long-time addict helping everyone be successful in their orchid growing. Blaine recently built a lab onsite, so he can now grow orchids from seed himself. Yes, orchids have seduced him to help propagate the species. Blaine will focus his talk on what makes an orchid an orchid, and how best to grown them in Humboldt county. "Catering to the curious and long-time addict."



*Masdevallia polysticta*, Web image

*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.*



R. 'Sir Charles Lemon'. The thick hair mass (indumentum) prevents evaporation, among other functions



R. nuttallii The reddish hairs on the leaves slow evaporation. This color helps prevent sunburn in young leaves.

### WORD OF THE MONTH: XEROPHYTE

*Text and Photos by Bruce Palmer*

Welcome back to another exciting Rhododendron year. We have great programs, fellowship and events coming up. Our local membership continues to increase, so we must be doing something right.

It has been a very dry year in our area. I don't know about your yard, but ours got only 75% of the average rain during the rain year July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013. Our smaller rhodies are suffering but the established ones are doing fine without extra irrigation. How do they survive such lack of rainfall? Part of the answer lies with this month's word: **XEROPHYTE** (Greek, *xeros*, dry, and *phyton*, a plant). One way plants are grouped is by their need for water. Hydrophytes need to live near or in water, mesophytes have an "average" requirement for water and **xerophytes** are adapted to dry conditions. Adaptations to dryness usually conjure up visions of cacti, bromeliads and various succulents, but most rhododendrons have some structures, mostly in the leaves, that make them resistant to desiccation (from the Latin *desicare*, to dry up completely). The ancestors of most of the hybrid rhodies in our yards grow on south-facing slopes in the Himalaya. They don't get a lot of water to begin with and much of what they do get tends to evaporate. To deal with this problem, many of our rhodies have leaf adaptations that help conserve water in the leaf and prevent evaporation. Thickened leaves, waxy coats on the surfaces, hairs, especially on the underside, and scales all help the plant to conserve what water it is able to take in and prevent loss from the hot sunlight. Typically, we don't have to deal with drying problems in our area, but that isn't true this year. Our rhododendrons are using all their **xerophytic** defenses to survive until the rains bring us much needed soil moisture and our autumn crop of mushrooms.

The **September 26** program by our local orchid guru Blaine Maynor should be interesting and educational. Bring your favorite dish to the potluck (it doesn't need to be xerophytic) and enjoy the first evening of our Rhododendron year.



Scales on leaves magnified. Scales cover openings that control water movement

R. "Southern Cloud" 40X



**Plant of the Month**  
***Rhododendron 'Lemon Dream'***  
*By, Don Wallace*

For those of you who might want to plant smaller growing cultivars with excellent foliage, this little rhododendron would be a good choice. *Rhododendron 'Lemon Dream'* was created by Steve McCullough while working at Briggs Nursery, a large tissue culture lab and nursery in Washington State. The hybrid is a cross of *R. 'Creamy Chiffon'* x *R. degronianum* ssp *yakushimanum*, Exbury form. The *R. 'Creamy Chiffon'* parent causes doubling to occur in some of the flowers, adding an attractive “fluffy” look. This prize winning plant will only grow to 2 feet tall and 3-4 feet across in 10 years.

One of its best features is the foliage...very dark green and shiny, and almost heart-shaped, adding to its appeal. We have noticed that the foliage is darker, almost black, if the plant is situated in more shade. Alternately, if in full sun it will need more fertilizer to keep its leaves dark. The flowering occurs in early May here in our garden, so a good strategy might be to plant it near some of the May blooming purples like *R. 'Peter Alan'* or *R. 'Tall Timber'*.

Oh, threats of hell and hopes of paradise!  
One thing at least is certain -- this life flies;  
One thing is certain, and the rest is lies;  
The flower that once has blown forever dies.  
Omar Khayyam, poet, mathematician, philosopher, astronomer, and physician (1048-1131)

**September is Membership Renewal time!**  
**What a great time to *bring a new friend or family member* to a meeting and *get a free plant*. If your friend or family *becomes a member*, they too will get a free plant!**  
***All new members get a free plant.***



The Eureka Chapter has picnicked at Humboldt Botanical Gardens, and members have received honors for their volunteer work in the gardens. Members have attended ARS conferences and trekked to Stagecoach Hill. Flowers have been shown at Shows and mini-shows, cash awards and trophies have been awarded. The Eureka Chapter Board of Directors have met each month to eat and plan future meetings and outings. Chapter members have planted, deadheaded, weeded, mulched and cleaned benches in the Humboldt Botanical Gardens Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden.



**Join the fun!**

## Queen Anne's Lace, Friend or Foe?

*Daucus carota*

Among its many common names Wild Carrot is most appropriate as this common weed is the ancestor to our vegetable garden carrot. If our own ancestors had been more diligent in harvesting their garden carrots we would not have this common roadside and garden wild flower. It grows in open ground from roadside to field. It is a biennial, flowering in its second year from a rosette of fernery foliage. Its flower/seed-heads stand all winter and it sheds its seeds for the next spring to germinate. Its fuzzy seeds are really fruits which cling to the cat, the dog, pant's legs and socks to be disbursed widely.

It is sometimes mistaken for North American native water hemlock (*Cicuta maculata*) and the European poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) both of which are deadly poisons. **Learn to identify these plants and remove them from your garden.**



Queen Anne's lace on the other hand may be safely harbored for its late summer airy white flowers standing above the last blooming daylilies and just-flowering Ericas.

If you decide to remove Queen Anne's lace do so before the seeds are ripe, or after the seeds are ripe dispose of the seeds in the trash before you compost the rest of the plant. Sniff the long white taproot to get the distinctive odor of carrot.

Queen Anne's Lace was named for the last Stuart monarch of England, Ireland and Scotland Queen Anne (1665 to 1714). It was she who dispersed so many German immigrants into the Hudson

River area of New York in 1710 after coming to heated resistance in England and Ireland the previous year for the settlement of German immigrants on English and Irish soil. As an aside, my paternal ancestors were among the Germans sent to Limerick...but that is another story. *By June Walsh*

## Vireya Collection at Vallarta Botanical Gardens, *By Dee Daneri*

In January of 2006 I visited a newly opened botanical garden near Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Shortly after introductions, owner Bob Price (pictured below) and I had found our common interest in Vireya rhododendrons, a plant literally unknown to Mexico. There are no native plants in the genus Rhododendron in Mexico. We would soon discover that the celebrated Panawea Zoo Gardens in Kea-au Hawaii is at the same latitude as the new Vallarta Botanical Gardens. The temptation to duplicate such a fine garden was beyond our control. Soon we were seeking any Vireya rhododendrons which may have been introduced into Mexico, and as luck would have it, a new collection was soon cropping up at the PV garden. New cuttings were also introduced from outside Mexico. While the altitude of the PV garden is 1000' higher than the Panawea Garden, the soil conditions are similar, and all conditions seemed good for growing Vireyas, save one. Unfortunately, a leafcutter ant unknown to Hawaii, is a major player in the insect world of the jungles of Mexico. After much testing and experimenting with control, this spring we gained enough confidence to finally plant some of the larger Vireyas into the ground. A public rhododendron garden now grows in Mexico, and a new opportunity for the home gardener of Mexico is about to become a reality. The existence of botanical gardens and the networking provided by plant societies, make these new opportunities available. Many friends of the American Rhododendron Society have made this new plant for Mexico a reality.





Eureka Chapter/American Rhododendron Society  
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**Eureka Chapter**

Eureka Chapter is published monthly except during July and August. Submissions from members are encouraged and should be mailed to June Walsh, Bulletin Editor, 2050 Irving Drive, Eureka, CA 95503-7022. Membership information and applications are also available from June Walsh. Eureka Chapter is a member of the Humboldt Botanical Gardens Foundation, Eureka, Calif, and The Rhododendron Species Foundation, Federal Way, Wash. Eureka Chapter is a chapter of the American Rhododendron Society.

**Future Programs**

<b>September 26, 2013</b>	<b>Blaine Mayor, Orchids for the People, POTLUCK</b>
October 24, 2013	Sherla Bertelmann, Hawaii Chapter and Vireyas
November	Enjoy Thanksgiving with Family and Friends
December 5, 2013	Don Wallace, Rhodos and Holiday Potluck
January 23, 2014	Elaine Sedlack, Asian Garden at UC Berkeley BG
February 27, 2014	Gisele Schoniger, Organics for Ericaceous Plants
March 27, 2014	Dennis McKiver, Mendo Coast BG Rhodos
April 24, 2014	Jack Olsen, Companion Plants for Rhodos
April 25 to 27, 2014	Rhodo Show and Sale
May 22, 2014	Mini Show and Potluck
June ?, 2014	Member Tour and Potluck Picnic

*Programs and Program dates are subject to change.*

**Eureka Chapter Officers and Board Members**  
 June 2012 to June 2014

<b>President, Bruce Palmer</b>	<b>Publicity, Ellie Gayner</b>
<b>Vice President, Jerry Reynolds</b>	<b>Past President, Betty Bottemiller</b>
<b>Secretary, Gail Ledbetter</b>	<b>Programs, Don Wallace</b>
<b>Treasurer, Tim Walsh</b>	<b>Membership, Max Abrahamsen</b>
<b>Director at Large, Nelda Palmer</b>	<b>Show Committee, Tom and Mary Marking</b>
<b>Newsletter Editor, June Walsh</b>	

For board member contact information call or email June Walsh 707-443-0604 or RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net

**Wanted!!!**

**Grateful-dead-headers at Humboldt Botanical Garden**  
**The rhodos in the Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden**  
**bloomed abundantly, now need deadheading. Call June 443-0604**