

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eugene Chapter

November 2012 Newsletter



Highlight of the
November Border

The petite, well
mannered little
bluestem, a perennial
prairie bunch grass:
*Schizachyrium
scoparium*

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NEWSLETTER

Frances Burns, NL Editor	541-896-3216
Electronic mailing	rebfeb@gmail.com

Postal Mailing

JoAnn Napier	541-746-0828
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Webmaster Ted Hewitt	547-687-8119
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EUGENE CHAPTER MISSION STATEMENT

Encourage the culture and
interest of rhododendrons.

Use our meetings for
educational opportunities
and building friendships.

Grow both species & hybrid
rhododendrons in our gardens.

Educate ourselves & the
community about the world
of rhododendrons.

Nurture the idea of garden
design with rhododendrons.

Exhibit our knowledge and
the beauty of rhododendrons
to the community.

COMPANION PLANTS FOR THE RHODODENDRON GARDEN NOVEMBER 8 PROGRAM BY ROGER GOSSLER



Eugene Chapter will present Roger Gossler, plantsman, nurseryman and co-author with Eric Gossler and Marjory Gossler of *The Gossler Guide to the Best Hardy Shrubs: More than 350 Expert Choices for Your Garden*. One can count on Roger to give us his always exciting and interesting up-to-date perspective on plants to compliment our favorite genera, rhododendrons.

According to his publisher, Timber Press, "Roger Gossler grew up in Springfield, Oregon on the Gossler family farm, and is one of those rare individuals who knew his career from birth. He became interested in plants at an early age and quickly became a leader in promoting the use of woody trees and shrubs. In the mid 1970's, Roger received a degree in Landscape Design and Maintenance from Lane Community College, and currently is an owner, buyer and main grower for Gossler Farms Nursery. He avidly researches what is new in the trade and worthy of inclusion in the nursery's catalog."

Roger speaks frequently to garden groups around the country including hardy plant groups in Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver, the Magnolia Society, the American Rhododendron Society, the Hardy Plant Society of Oregon and the Willamette Valley Hardy Plant Group, as well as at North Carolina State University, the California Horticulture Society, and the Northwest Horticultural Society. He visits European gardens and gardeners from time to time as well.

For anyone attending the meeting who wants to try their hand at raising rhodies from seed, members are asked to bring open-pollinated seed-pods to the meeting. Please remember the seed parent for identification.

The meetings is on November 8 at Campbell Center, 155 High Street, Eugene. Cookies and coffee will be served at 7:00 p.m. The program will begin at 7:30; door prize drawings will be the final attraction. An informal no-host dinner at P. F. Chang's Chinese Bistro 124 Coburg Road in the Oakway Mall complex will be held at 5 p.m. Please e-mail Helen at galen.baxter@comcast.net or phone 541-461-6082 by Monday, November 5 if you plan to attend the dinner.

Editor's Byte Frances Burns

AN INTRODUCTION TO ANOTHER NEW "BEST FRIEND" – ARION RUFUS

While thinning out forsythia, errant blackberries and topping asters for the winter, I met up close and personal with an impressive stranger, a slug who appeared to be dipped in light chocolate and, who upon introduction, was *Mollusca Gastropod Stylommatophora Arionidae Arion Rufus*, the European Red Slug, a large chunky fellow rumored to be a new invasive pest in the Northwest. It likely rode into my garden on a nursery pot. He/she extended himself /herself to between 6 and 8 inches of beautiful copper colored protoplasm and began hot-footing it down the garden path. When I picked it up, it compacted itself into a big coppery brown mound of protoplasm – shaped like a porcupine without quills, resting on its trademark orange “foot” – or a creatively molded chunk of chocolate displayed on a silken orange ruffle.

It has been my policy to finish off quickly all non-native slugs, leaving the PNW native banana slug to flourish because, truthfully, I have never caught a banana slug being a thug. I placed him/her on a stump (slugs are hermaphrodites with reproductive organs associated with both male and female – it's all very complicated – go figure!). My intention was to flush it you know where – but being a far piece from the house, I considered a mighty stomp with a rubber-booted foot, but I multi-tasked by placing it carefully on a stump for a few moments while I dumped a cartful of bark on a nearby bed,

I mean, how far could Rufus possibly travel on one foot in that brief span of time? Far enough, it turned out. When I returned to deliver the *coup de grace*, it was nowhere to be seen. It had probably oozed itself down between the stump and its bark. With an uncharacteristic lack of fortitude, I could not bring myself to poke my finger into the black void to find it.

So off to the house to see what the bounty might be on this big fat squishy outlaw on the loose. Plumbing the depths of the internet, I found Rufus described as a “formidable, eating machine” and a “major chomper of dahlias”. On the other hand, in the wisdom of the universe I analyzed, slugs are little vacuum cleaners of the untidy detritus of the garden. The final tidbit of unlikely information was that a museum quality large canvas print measuring 31.875 “ x 48” portraying my now somewhat likeable new friend Arion Rufus munching on a mushroom by Portland artist Noah Cole can be purchased through amazon.com for the tidy some of \$375.11 plus \$110.19 for shipping.

Also available at amazon.com is a lovely photo mug of an extended Arion Rufus padding across a bed of moss for \$15.99. (Add ten bucks to your order and shipping is free!) Check your Christmas list for cup collectors. My gentle heart deterred me from flushing a celebrity gastropod, never mind find him, ergo Rufus-Ruthus will live to munch another day.



European
Red Slug
Arion Rufus
on a
Mushroom –
Canvas by
Noah Cole
available at
amazon.com



Chocolate colored Arion Rufus
available worldwide in gardens of
serious chocolatiers



Arion Rufus Mugs
Available at amazon.com
for avid cup collectors

NANAIMO NW FALL CONFERENCE 2012

When I heard about the Seminar in B.C I got so excited and looked forward to attending, especially in my case, visiting a new town Nanaimo. Nanaimo is one of old towns in B.C – located by a beautiful harbor. In a sense if you are in love it's a romantic place to be – of course that made sense for all the visiting Rhode attendees.

In the harbor one can see all kinds of boats – even pontoon planes landing on the waters. Nanaimo is very clean, scenic, picturesque, safe and peaceful.

Of course, my purpose in being there was to attend lectures and go on the garden tours. It is going to make a long story if I go through details of what, when and how everything that went on during the whole seminar. In brief the Nanaimo Rhododendron Chapter put on a wonderful program – it was very enjoyable and they did it with fragrance!

I will mention a few gardens I attended: Milner for one; it is vast – seventy acres of land in a woodland nature setting. I was told there is a Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) as old as 700 years! Many special species of trees were planted: *Stewartia*, *Davidia involucrata*, *Parrotia persica* and so forth...

All sorts of activities take place in this garden: hands-on programs for college students who are majoring in botany, programs for children, plant propagation, and daily tours in the gardens so visitors can see all sorts of ancient plants, including rhododendrons. In the past this garden had very well-known visitors: Princes Charles and Lady Diana.

All the gardens I visited had the luxury of being by the lakes, but my second garden visit contrasted with the first. It was garden of Wolfgang and Vivian Ruff – very neat and newly planted, with a beautiful scenic back yard on Craig Lake. Included were a variety of fruit trees in their landscape and for the first time I saw an Almond tree with the bitter nuts!

Moving on to my next garden, I visited the old garden of Nixon ("RiverDell") and the rhododendrons were started from wild collected seeds in 1973 and situated by Nanoose Bay, they are well set up for Alpine gardening.

My last garden for the tour was that of the Taylors, Roy and Janet. Their garden is in Mediterranean style and was designed by professional landscape designer Judith Walker. Many drought tolerant plants were used, there was a dry stream, and a very luxurious sitting area from which you could view a picture with this article. One thing that gripped my attention was the use of empty milk jars used as slow watering cans beside plantings. I thought it a clever idea.

Nanaimo is very picturesque and beautiful, there are lakes all over in various areas. The choices for seminar speakers were excellent, as were the gardens which I visited. The foods provided were wonderful, as Jack Olson can attest, and above all the hospitality of the Nanaimo Chapter and Canada as a whole made it exceptional. I thank them on behalf of Eugene Chapter and hope to be back for another round. I included a few pictures to view from this visit.



Asters purple asterisks for autumn–

Conrad Aiken (1930)



Thanks, Nanaimo, for our wonderful experiences at the PNW Conference in a beautiful part of the world.



PLACES TO GO, PEOPLE TO SEE AND UNPAID DUES TO SETTLE

Gary Parent has graciously volunteered to provide goodies for the November meeting. Thank you, Gary!

And thank you, Helen Baxter, for those delicious cookies at the October meeting!

SIUSLAW CHAPTER will meet at the Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw, 3669 Highway 101 in Florence, at 6:30 p.m. for refreshments, followed at 7 p.m. by meeting and program. The meeting and program are free and open to all.

Harold Greer will present his new program on *Rhododendron Diversity*, which is sure to provide a new take on our favorite genus.

Preceding the meeting those who wish can attend a no-host dinner at China Bay Restaurant, 1073 Highway 101, at 5 p.m. on Tuesday Nov 20. Please call Rosemary Rebello, 541-997-6167 or e-mail tonyrosemay@charter.net

LAST CALL FOR DUES!!

Time is running out. Dues unpaid by December 1 will mean no Winter ARS Journal in January, and removal of your name from ARS national and local membership listings.

Dues are \$40 for single or dual membership in the American Rhododendron Society and \$10 for associate membership.

Make checks payable to **ARS Eugene Chapter**; provide your current mail address, e-mail address and phone number. Mail in envelope previously provided, or new one to:

Treasurer Ted Hewitt
PO Box 7704
Springfield, OR 97475

Or call him at 547-687-8119 if you prefer to pay with your credit card.

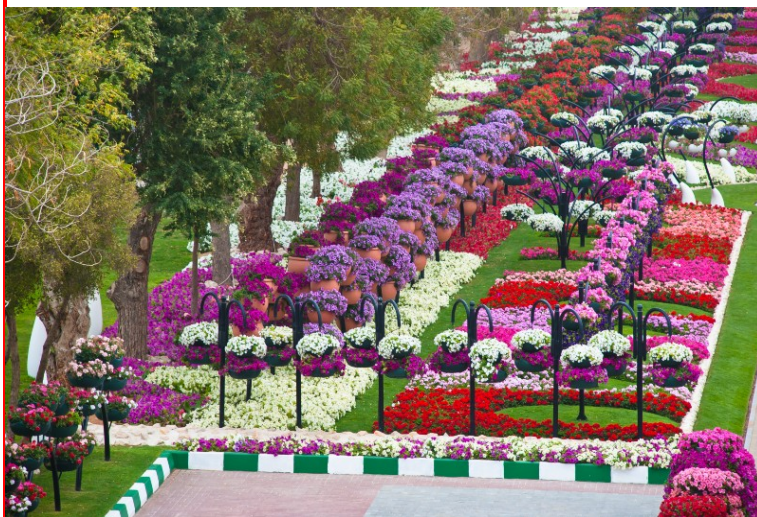
Thanks!

THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY HARDY PLANT GROUP is featuring Harold Greer of Greer Gardens on Tuesday November 13, 2012 at 7 p.m. at the Campbell Community Center, 155 High St., Eugene, OR.

A true expert in all fields regarding rhododendrons and azaleas, Harold authored one of the most famous reference books, *Greer's Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons*. He has received the coveted Gold Medal award from the American Rhododendron Society and served as the Society's International President.

Harold's presentation is on *Rhododendron Diversity* - from tiny alpine varieties to tree rhododendrons, hardy to tropical, lepidote to elepidote, oldest to newest - giving us real insight into this extremely diverse genus.

Doors open at 6:30 for book sales and viewing botanical samples. Admission is \$5 for non-members and free for members. Membership in the Hardy Plant Group is \$20 annually. There is ample parking in the parking lot at the corner of 2nd Ave. and High Street. For more information about the group or this event, visit the web site at or call 541-344-0896.



The First park in Guinness World Records on "The Largest Number of Hanging Flower Baskets" .

This is just one area of the park, which is located in the United Arab Emirates, and is the largest working floral park in the world. Imagine watering and taking care of this park!

Thanks to Dick Cavender for sharing!

American Rhododendron Society
Eugene Chapter
PO Box 7704
Springfield, OR 97475

FALL COLOR IN THE GARDEN

The Sorrel Tree / The Sour Wood Tree



Oxydendron arboreum

Photo by Frances Burns

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Newsletter

2012 CHAPTER CALENDAR 2013

- Nov 8 Chapter meeting and Program - *Companion Plants for the Rhododendron Garden* Roger Gossler
- Dec 13 Christmas Potluck 6:00 p.m. Campbell Center, 155 High Street, Eugene
- Jan 10 Chapter meeting and program: *Rhododendron Diversity*, Harold Greer
Showing all of the different types of plants that exist in the Genus Rhododendron - An amazing diversity that most people do not realize exists in the Genus Rhododendron.
- Feb 14 Chapter meeting and program, *Western North American Rhododendron Species Project* - Clarice Clarke
- Mar 14 Chapter Annual meeting and program, *Hydrangeas in Your Garden* Kristen Van Hoose
- Apr 20 Spring Show and Awards Banquet, Program - *Species Azaleas of North America* - Mike Stewart
- May 11 Plant Sale with the WVHPG
- June Picnic

Visit our Eugene Chapter Web Site
www.eugene-chapter-ars.org