

Eugene Chapter

A m e r i c a n R h o d o d e n d r o n S o c i e t y

Officers, Board Members, & Committees

President	Ali Sarlak
Vice-President	Terry Henderson
Treasurer	Nancy Burns
Secretary	Sherlyn Hilton
Past-President	
Membership	Nancy Burns

Jack Olson	2014-2016
Gordon Wylie	2014-2017
Helen Baxter	2015-2018
Grace FowlerGore	2015-2018

Committees

- **Show:** Helen Baxter, Sherlyn Hilton, Terry Henderson
- **Nominating:**
- **Welfare:** Nancy & Harold Greer
- **Hospitality:** Helen Baxter, Nancy Burns
- **Programs:** Board of Directors

Newsletter

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February 2016 Chapter Meeting Thursday, February 11, 2016

6:30 p.m. at the Campbell Community Center
155 High Street in Eugene

- Join us for cookies, coffee, and conversation at 6:30 p.m. with the program at 7:00.

- Program: *Lilla Leach's 'Azalea'*
by Loren Russell



This program will be about the history of the genus *Kalmiopsis* from the discovery of *Kalmiopsis leachiana* by Lilla Leach, a noted plantswoman from Portland, in 1930 to the subsequent discovery of the Umpqua populations [now given separate species status as *Kalmiopsis fragrans*] to the cultivation and hybridization of the two species to the peculiar soil preferences leading to a very narrow geographic range. (Note: *Kalmiopsis* is the only plant genus that is endemic to (found only in) Oregon.) Loren will also discuss the possible plant relationships of *Kalmiopsis* and how we might imagine its evolutionary history by comparing its closer relatives. Finally, Loren will illustrate *Kalmiopsis* in its native landscapes, showing the special places where *Kalmiopsis leachiana* grows in the *Kalmiopsis* Wilderness Area and *Kalmiopsis fragrans* on the North Umpqua River watershed. In particular, he will take the audience to the Limpy Rock area, with distinctive tuff hoodoos, rock shelters with ochre paintings, and the rocks festooned on all sides by *Kalmiopsis*.

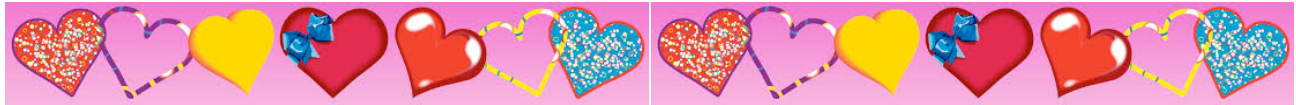


Kalmiopsis fragrans in the rock garden
photo by Ted Hewitt

About our Speaker:**Loren Russell, Plantsman**

A life-long native of the Pacific Northwest, Loren Russell grew up on a dairy farm in northwestern Washington. A compulsive naturalist, he recalls early childhood encounters with creatures ranging from porcupines and snowy owls to water striders and thatched-nest ants. He enjoyed exploring for and identifying plants, like the sundews, cranberries, and Labrador tea growing in a floating sphagnum bog on a neighbor's farm. After graduating from the University of Washington with a degree in zoology, Loren moved to Corvallis, completing his doctorate in entomology (with a thesis on the "Oregon funnybug") at OSU in 1979. After completing his degree, Loren worked at the US EPA lab in Corvallis, finally putting his roots down for good when he met and married Flo, a philosophy professor at OSU.

Loren eventually renewed his interest in plants, both in the garden and in the wild. Over the past 35 years or so, he has hiked and photographed plants in the mountains of the Pacific Northwest and northern California, with occasional longer trips to the Rockies and beyond. As a gardener, Loren is an enthusiastic collector, growing "one of everything" and constructing a wide range of garden habitats to accommodate his rare and unusual plants. In the late 1980s, Loren became active in the North American Rock Garden Society [NARGS], and over the years, helped organize field and study weekend meetings, and contributing a number of articles to the organization's Bulletin. Loren has given dozens of talks on gardening and natural history. He was a NARGS National Speaker in 2000, and more recently an invited speaker in chapters in Seattle, Calgary, Vancouver BC and Denver.

**Pre-Meeting Dinner to meet the speaker**

Join us for the pre-meeting dinner to visit with Loren at Bai Khao Thai Restaurant at 5:00 p.m. at 541 W. Centennial Blvd in Springfield. This is at the east end of the Value Village Shopping Center with entrance off Prescott St. Please contact Helen by phone at 541-461-6082 or by e-mail at galen.baxter@comcast.net by Tuesday, February 9, so that she can let this small, family-run restaurant know how many to expect.

March Elections

At the March 10 Chapter meeting, we will be electing the leadership positions of president, vice-president, and one Board seat. The officer positions are for two years and the board seat is for three years. So far, the following nominations have been presented to the Board - Terry Henderson for president, Jack Olson for vice-president, and no one for the board seat. If you have other nominations

(including yourself) please contact Ali. The president convenes both chapter and board meetings, but also coordinates all activities and events making sure that they are planned and carried out well. The vice-president serves as the program coordinator, handling communications and arrangements with the speakers. A board member participates in board meetings and helps lead some of the chapter activities. Please help if you can.

From the President

Course 101

I heard that in the English language there is an expression “taking Course 101” that means to learn the basis for living. This brings me to our love of Rhododendrons and, if you are a beginner, where to start. There are certain terminologies and names that can be rather overwhelming and, at the same time, confusing but not clarifying what is meant.

Let's begin with **Genus** (the plural is Genera) that is defined as a group of plants which include several or many species and places below the classification of “Family” and above “Species”. Then we ask what is meant by **species** (by the way species is both singular and plural). In the words of L.H. Bailey, species is “a kind of plant or animal distinct from other kinds in marked or essential features that has good characters of identification”. Future new species “must differ by geological and ecological growing habitat and species usually interbreed among the same groups of their own and the result still stays the same”. What about **subspecies**? Subspecies generally do not have to have many similar characteristics, only one or two is enough, but one of the requirements is for subspecies is that plants have to grow in a different geological area. Then someone may ask what is the **varietats** (plural varietates) [**editor's note: Latin for variety and varieties**] which actually is a subdivision of species which is different in

minor characteristics. We are not quite done yet. How about **forma** (plural formae) [**editor's note: Latin for form and forms**]. In this case some plants appear in the wild with particular variation and it might breed through. Then, how about **cultivar**, which is defined as a plant that distinguishes itself through variation of species. And also, **clone** whose characteristics derive from a single plant by asexual ways of budding, rooting, and grafting.

We are almost there now. How about **cult** variant? What is a definition on that and I would say it is that plants differ by habit or leaves from their parents and, in this case, commonly is called a **sport**. And the last one which is an important one is **hybrid** which is defined by crossing two plants, male and female, usually of the same genus to produce many seeds which will often show differences among the seedlings.

As a president's message, we recently had a very productive board meeting with many items on the agenda to discuss and consider. Many of them were raised by board member, Grace Fowler-Gore. Now we need to come up with solutions and actions, as, without the actions, we won't produce any results. In this end, we need your help on many tasks with our society. As I speak, we need a board member for our coming election, so please let me know if you would like to become a board member. Thank you.

Ali

Special Hearts go to:

- Leonard and Grace for the January Tasty Treats.
- Helen Baxter and Grace Fowler-Gore have volunteered to bring the I ♥ Cookies/Treats on February 11



Editor's Note: Earlier in the fall as I was walking around our garden, I noticed the distinctively notched leaves on a rhododendron from the munching of adult root weevils. This is rarely a problem for us but it looks like we have a new colony of the critters in one bed. Nearby, however, I noticed several other problems on the foliage of the rhododendrons that I realized I did not know the cause. Then, in a recent edition of the Willamette Chapter ARS newsletter, the editor, Dick Lundin, had an article with excellent photos of a number of problems and their causes. A quick e-mail to Dick brought me the source of his information as a publication from the Washington State University Extension, *How to Identify Rhododendron and Azalea Problems*, that encourages the public distribution of the material. Below are a few excerpts and more will follow in future months.

How to Identify Rhododendron and Azalea Problems

SPOTTING, DISCOLORATION, OR DEAD AREAS ON PLANT PARTS



Fig. 7. Physiological leaf spot. Note diffuse blotches on leaves.

Physiological Leaf Spot

Symptoms: Various colored (generally dark purple), discrete or diffuse spots, discoloration and blotches occur on leaves as a result of environmental and cultural stress (Fig. 7). Some varieties (Mrs. G.W. Leak) are known for their spots.

Cause: Actual causes are not known. If the problem is severe or persistent, consider replacing the rhododendron with a more desirable variety.



Fig. 8. Fungus leaf spot. Several species of fungi cause this disease.

Fungus Leaf Spot

Symptoms: Spots are irregular in size and color (Fig. 8). Some have red-brown borders with silvery gray centers. Very small black dots (fruiting structures of fungi) are sometimes visible in the center of the spot or in concentric rings. These fungi commonly enter through wounds.

Cause: The fungi *Phyllosticta*, *Septoria*, *Pestalotia* are commonly the causal agents of this malady. Remove and destroy affected leaves. Spray with a registered fungicide after flowering and repeat at 10–14 day intervals until dry weather begins. It is usually advisable to apply a spreader-sticker with the fungicide to hold the fungicide on the leaves during rains.

Azalea Leafminer

Symptoms: Brown, blister-like mines on leaves. Leaves may be tightly rolled and skeletonized followed by premature leaf drop. Plants look thin and scraggly.

Cause: Azalea leaf miner, *Caloptilia azaleella*, (Fig. 9). Small yellowish caterpillars mine inside leaf tissues and later roll the leaves. Chemical controls may be used if the infestation is severe. If only a few leaves are involved, squeezing the insect within its mine may decrease damage to an acceptable level. Since the larvae pupate in leaf debris, rake and destroy the leaves in the fall. Do not compost.



Fig. 9. Azalea leafminer damage.

Rhododendron Leafminer

Symptom: A serpentine or fairly straight mine starting at the leaf edge and eventually going vertically to, into, or across the midrib causing all leaf tissue from that point to the tip to die.

Cause: Rhododendron leafminer (Fig. 10). Seldom causes enough damage to warrant control. Remove and destroy infested leaves.



Fig. 10. Mine and damage of rhododendron leafminer (middle leaf).

January 20 - *R. nivei* at the west end of the main path in Hendricks had many bright, dark pink buds.

Rhododendron Species Foundation Associate Membership

The ARS Eugene Chapter is an Associate Member of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Federal Way WA and that allows each of our members free admission to the garden just by telling them that you are a member of the ARS Eugene Chapter. March and April are among the best months to visit this special garden to see the many species rhododendrons in bloom so this is a good time to plan a trip.

Kudos to Herald

Be sure to notice in the new Winter 2016 ARS Journal that Harold Greer was named the winner for best photo in the *People, Insects, Animals* category of the 2015 ARS Photo Contest as well as Runner-up in 3 other categories including *Best in Contest*. It's always nice to see our members recognized for their efforts in the ARS.

Welcome to our New Members

- Patricia Swift and her husband, Miles, who live in Creswell have joined the chapter in 2016.
- Elaine Sedlak is a new Associate Member and is a long time California Chapter member of the ARS. For many years, she has been a horticulturist at the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden and has been in charge of the Asian Garden with its renowned collection of rhododendrons for much of that. She is on the Board of Directors of the Rhododendron Species Foundation.
- Please look for them at our meetings and introduce yourself.

Rhododendron benhalli

This charming 3'-4' shrub was introduced to Western gardens in the early 20th century from Japan when it was classified as *Menziesia ciliicalyx* but still in the Ericaceae family like *Rhododendron*. It is a deciduous shrub with a rounded growth habit, small fuzzy, bright green leaves and prefers partial shade and acid soil with good drainage. The small dangling, pink urn-shaped, blossoms hang in clusters and appear in spring. It also has wonderful fall color. In 2011, it was moved to the Genus *Rhododendron* based on DNA research and placed in the Subgenus Pentanthera with deciduous azaleas. The rest of the classification is still under debate but there is evidence that will place it in Section Sciadorhodion with *schlippenbachii*, *albrechtii*, *quinquefolium*, and *pentifolium* though, perhaps, in a different subsection. Since there already is a *R. ciliicalyx*, it's new name is *Rhododendron benhalli*, named after Dr. Ben Hall, a botanist at the University of Washington who has pioneered the use of DNA sequences in the study of *Rhododendron* taxonomy.



R. benhalli in front of leaves of *R. edgeworthii*.
It's own smaller leaves are shown below.
photo by Ted Hewitt

Ted's Notes

- In his President's Message, Ali brings up some good points about the terminology and the vocabulary that we often use in talking about rhododendrons. At the beginning, it can be rather daunting but it also forms a solid basis for helping us understand more about this large and varied genus. It has taken years for me to start making sense of some of the classification but, now that I understand the classification better, it helps me group together rhododendrons by common characteristics.
- I also have found that, by understanding more about the one genus *Rhododendron*, I can better understand plants that are in other genera.
- In the 2016 Rhododendron Species Foundation Yearbook, Ken Cox has an article about the use of DNA research that supports moving the genera *Menziesia* and *Ledum* into the genus *Rhododendron* based on the evolutionary history of *Rhododendron*. However, at this point, it has not been determined where in the classification they would fit best. It appears that *Menziesia*, anyway, would fit best in Subgenus Pentanthera Section Sciadorhodion (along with *schlippenbachii*, *albrechtii*, and *quinquefolium*). It looks like the taxonomists will be busy for quite some time determining how the DNA research is restructuring the classification system that was so long based on observation of flower and leaf parts. I might note here that what was known by gardeners as *Menziesia ciliicalyx* is now known more correctly as *Rhododendron behallii* because the name *Rhododendron ciliicalyx* was already taken.
- Last month I mentioned that I will be stepping down as newsletter editor in June and that it would be nice to have some of you thinking about taking on a new role in the chapter. When Barbara Novak, the previous editor, was

ill, I looked into how one puts together a newsletter and found that there are many different kinds of publishing software, some of which are very easy to use. It did not take me long to discover that one of the highly recommended programs for Macs was right on my computer as part of the word processing program, Pages, that I use all the time. In fact, there are many different kinds of templates for things like posters, certificates, and invitations as well as newsletters. However, when I chose a template that I liked the looks of, I soon found that the idea of just replacing the text with my text did not work well because they were not the same length. Somewhat by accident, I discovered that the template was simply put together in layers of shapes and text boxes and that it was quite simple to delete one or more layers to simplify the look and allow one to change the size of the text box. Once I had the look of the front page that I liked, I saved it as my template and now can start from there each month without having to put in the information that stays the same. The succeeding pages are simply blanks and I create the text boxes in the size and shape that I like. The last page is again a good one for a template. Now, the structure of the newsletter is quite simple, but it is the content pages that take time to design and to write the text. Hence, it is nice when chapter members write an article. It does take time to insert photos or clipart but that is also a fun challenge. I would encourage you, as a prospective editor, to look at some of the newsletters from other chapters in the ARS to see the wide variety and to feel free to adapt the newsletter to a style with which you would be comfortable. It is definitely a fun and enjoyable experience to produce a nice newsletter for the chapter.

Ted

♥ Happy Valentines Day ♥

*February 2016
Newsletter*



2016 ARS Convention

Williamsburg, Virginia
April 20-24, 2016

ARS EUGENE CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2016

2015

EVENT CALENDAR

2016

CHAPTER EVENTS:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| February 11 | Chapter Meeting - Loren Russell on <i>Lilla Leach's Azalea</i> ' |
| March 10 | Chapter Meeting - Bill Hicks on <i>Lepidote Rhododendrons in the Garden</i>
Annual Business Meeting with Elections
This year the offices of President, Vice-President, and one Board Seat will be elected. Let Ali know of nominations that you have (including yourself). |
| April 9 | 2016 Spring Rhododendron Show and Banquet, Hilton Garden Inn, Springfield
Speaker: Bob Zimmerman Topic: TBA |
| April 20-24 | 2016 ARS Convention, Williamsburg, VA - www.arsasaconvention2016.org |
| May 7 | Chapter Plant Sale, Lane County Fairgrounds, 9:00 - 2:00 |
| June ?? | June Picnic, details TBA |

September 30 - October 2

**2016 Western Regional Rhododendron Conference
Agate Beach Best Western Hotel, Newport OR**

Click for a great video: <https://youtu.be/nUGRWXdoppU>

