

American Rhododendron Society



Eugene Chapter Newsletter

~ ~ September News ~ ~

Happy Fall! As I write this greeting, there is rain in the forecast and a sense that our long, dry, hot summer is coming to an end. I don't know about you, but I am relieved!

Our first meeting will be via ZOOM on Wednesday, October 20th (6:30 pm, Gathering Time; 7:00 pm, Program). We really hope that everyone will try to join us. If you've never ZOOMed before, reach out to us at ARS.EugeneChapter@gmail.com and we will be happy to send you a cheat sheet to help you be ready to join the meeting. If there is enough interest, we might even set up a practice meeting ... so let us know if you need some assistance! We want everyone to be able to join in!

The program for our October meeting will be a video presentation "Pruning Rhododendrons: How and When?" given by Don Wallace. This video is being shared with us by the Eureka ARS Chapter and we are very appreciative. We'll share more about the speaker and his presentation in next month's newsletter.

Membership Renewal time is just around the corner, so be watching for more information about renewing your membership. Invite a friend or neighbor to join one of the ZOOM sessions and learn more about us. We are hopeful that it won't be much longer until we can have face-to-face meetings again and we are working to be ready to come together as soon as it is safe to do so!

September 2021

Chapter Meetings

Our Chapter Meetings are typically held at 7 PM on the third Wednesday of the month, October through March, unless otherwise specified.

Unfortunately, face-to-face meetings are currently suspended due to Covid-19.

Upcoming ZOOM Chapter Meetings

Wednesday, October 20
Wednesday, November 17

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~ Rhododendron of the Month ~ 'Harold Greer'

By Maria Stewart

Reprinted from the Portland ARS Chapter newsletter, *Rhododendron News*,
(with permission from both the author and the editor)

In Honor of a Great Man, a Beautiful Rhododendron with the Perfect Name: *R. 'Harold Greer'*

A few months ago, Harold presented us with his namesake rhododendron that we now proudly have in our garden. It will always be a reminder of our good friend, his generosity, and his ability to create excellent rhododendrons. This rhododendron has a very strong structure with vibrantly colored trusses. Its habit is upright with vigorous branching. Although we have not seen our new plant bloom yet, it is obvious that the structure will proudly hold up its large blossoms.

When Harold hybridized his namesake, he chose two parents with good growth habit and handsome leaves: (*R. 'Very Berry'* x *R. 'Horizon Monarch'*). With these two exceptional parents, *R. 'Harold Greer'* is a plant you must have.

The seed parent, *R. 'Very Berry'*, another Greer hybrid, is known for its large, deep fir-green leaves that thickly cover the plant. "Gigantic" is the word Harold used to describe these 10-inch-long leaves. In our experience growing this commercially, it withstood both cold and heat extremes. *R. 'Very Berry'* should take -10° F.

The pollen parent, *R. 'Horizon Monarch'*, is known for its very large trusses of pale greenish-yellow corollas with a vivid red flare. Again, Harold was working toward creating a magnificent hybrid that displayed both large leaves and large flowers.

R. 'Harold Greer' will display ball trusses of 10 corollas with very wavy-edged lobes, deep purplish-pink in bud, opening inside pale yellow, with deep purplish-pink picotee margins. The calyx is pale yellow with deep purplish-pink stripes. It will bloom in early May in western Oregon and is rated to 0° F.

Enjoy this wonderful plant, hold dear the memories of Harold Greer, and cherish the many contributions to the world of rhododendrons that he gave us.



X



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Photos by Harold Greer



Young 'Harold Greer' in the Stewart Garden
Photo by Mike Stewart



2021 Virtual ARS Fall Conference

Fall Into Gardening

October 23 and 24, 2021

This virtual conference is at **NO COST** and open to all interested gardeners - members and non-members - anywhere!

To Register: <https://mailchi.mp/9151e79e2a98/fall-conference-2021>

All you have to do is enter your email address and you're registered!

And just in case you missed it ... **It's FREE!**

ARS 2021 Virtual Fall Conference Schedule

Saturday, October 23

9:00 am - 1:00 pm (PST)

Hartwig Schepker, Germany
Sichuan: A Plantsman's Paradise

Shannon Berch, British Columbia
Living Soils

David Sellars, British Columbia
From Rhododendrons to Rock Gardening

Don Hyatt, Virginia
A Walk in the Woods

Sunday, October 24

9:00 am - 1:00 pm (PST)

David Millais, United Kingdom
Conservation of Heritage Rhodos

Linda Chalker-Scott, Washington
Landscape Mulches

Richard Dionne, Québec
Growing Rhododendrons in Québec

Don Wallace, California
Fragrant Rhododendrons

Hosted by Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society and Nanaimo Rhododendron Society in Partnership with Vancouver Island Master Gardeners

For a detailed conference schedule, topic descriptions, and speaker biographies please visit:

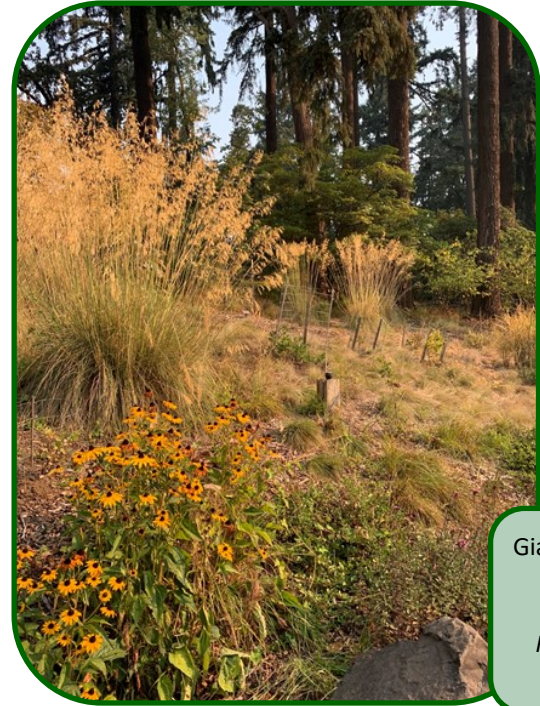
https://rhododendron.org/Fall_2021_Conference.pdf

~~ News from Hendricks Park ~~

by Emily Aune "The Xeric Meadow"

It has been a long hot summer and as global temperatures rise and water resources are becoming more scarce, we all might consider a broader plant palette in our garden. There are very few areas in Hendricks Park that are sunny and open, but one such area exists as a result of losing a very large oak tree in 2010.

The volunteer-based Rhododendron Garden Committee and I decided we would attempt to create a meadow landscape with low water needs in this area. We also thought decreasing the amount of water in this area might help curtail the invasion of horsetail. We named it the Xeric Meadow, derived from the root *xera*, meaning 'dry'. It has been a work in progress through the years and it is finally coming together as the plants mature and we have had more successful plantings.



Giant Feather Grass *Stipa gigantea* recently renamed as *Celtia gigantea*, with the understory grass of Roemer's fescue *Festuca roemerii* and California oatgrass *Danthonia californica*

To find the Xeric Meadow, you walk west from the Hendricks Park Shelter, cross Birch Lane, and continue up Bartow's Path until you see a

row of boulders marking the edge of the meadow. We started this planting in 2017 with a couple of Black Oaks and several bright yellow and green 'Color Guard' Yucca. We also planted nine clumps of *Stipa gigantea* which are now stunning, seven foot tall grass clumps with feathery open plumes.

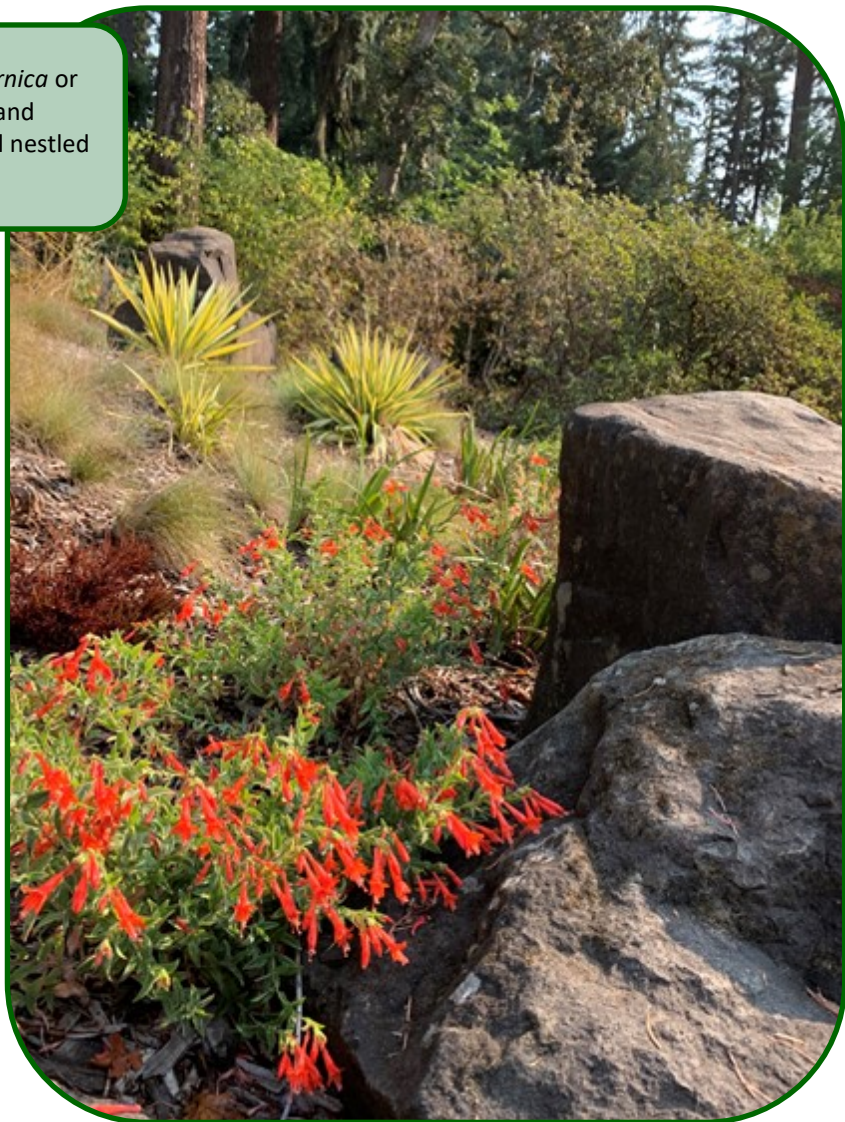
The next planting season we added a shrub layer of plants mostly acquired from Xera Nursery in

Pittosporum tobia 'Tall and Tough' or Japanese Mock Orange has tough waxy leaves that remind me of rhododendron leaves, plus it has sweet smelling white flowers in late spring and can withstand cooler temperatures than other pittosporums.



Epilobium canum formerly *Zauschneria californica* or California Fuchsia is bright in the foreground and 'Color Guard' Yucca glow bright in the back all nestled in giant boulders throughout the meadow.

Portland. We planted several manzanitas, a grevillea, ceonothus and a *Pittosporum tobia* 'Tall and Tough'. I really like this pittosporum, because it has the thick waxy leaves resembling a rhododendron, but grows in very different conditions. Unfortunately, the deer also really like these same conditions - open spaces - and they seem to wrestle with these plants when I'm not there. After damage to many of these plants, I started caging the young, woody plants throughout the garden. It isn't my favorite look, but it gives the plants time to get established and be able to withstand a broken branch here and there.



Plants set out for our Spring planting

In 2019, we started the understory of grass throughout the landscape. To start by seed, we had to remove the mulch and start seeds with a consistent water regime, combined with very careful weeding. Our primary grasses include California oatgrass and Roemer's fescue. Both of these bunchgrasses are native to Oregon (and California) and do well with summer drought. The first year was thin, but year two filled in nicely. I also brought a couple of clumps of plants from my home garden, mainly California fuchsias. These bright red flowers offer a late summer bloom and hummingbirds love them.

Finally, we are getting to the fun part and adding more flowers, flowers, flowers. This spring, we planted clumps of Pacific Coast iris, salvias, and white yarrow throughout. This fall, I will order some bulbs that can pop up through the bunchgrasses, bringing us closer to having a unique low water meadow within

our garden. Although I love my rhododendrons, I always think diversity is an important aspect of a garden, especially if conditions present themselves.

Our Mission

Encourage the culture and interest of rhododendrons

Use our meetings for educational opportunities and building friendships

Grow both species and hybrid rhododendrons in our gardens

Educate ourselves and 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



American Rhododendron Society

Public group · 1.7K members

Joined + Invite

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Do you do Facebook? If you enjoy connecting with people using Facebook, you might enjoy joining this Facebook group, which is made up of people from all around the world and from right here in our neck of the woods, too! As you scroll through the many wonderful pictures and comments, you will come across folks you know! Plus, it can be a wonderful forum for identification of flowers and diseases. Check it out at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/35429932192>



Mark your Calendars! Registration opens November 1, 2021

Plans are going full speed ahead for the ARS Spring Convention, celebrating the (belated) 75th Anniversary of the ARS.

Explore the convention website at

<https://ars2022.org/>

Most, if not all, of the elements of the postponed 2020 convention are being duplicated.

A promotional video for the convention is posted here:

https://youtu.be/2_i6v48mWuU

News from Neighboring ARS Chapters

ARS Portland Chapter

***Rhododendron occidentale:* “The Outlaw Species”**

Speaker: Dick ‘Red’ Cavender

Thursday, September 16, 2021

6:30 PM, Meeting opens / 7:00 PM, Program

From Dick: Like many Westerners, *R. occidentale* is fiercely independent. It takes great delight in confounding the taxonomists because it simply does not obey the rules! Taxonomists expect species to be fairly uniform but *occidentale* is extremely variable. These variations include leaf texture, flower color, size, shape, and an ability to thrive throughout a very large range of habitats. *The one consistent thing is occidentale’s great fragrance.* Dick will show us some of the variability of the plants throughout its range and will show and tell you why you really need to have a number of these fine plants in your garden.

Dick and Karen are the owners of Red’s Rhodies in Sherwood, Oregon, specializing in *Rhododendron occidentale*. Dick has been an avid collector, hybridizer, and grower of *Rhododendron occidentale* for about 55 years. He has named and registered a number of wild-collected clones and his hybrids.

The Cavender property encompasses about five acres of which about half is garden. Another two acres are dedicated to growing rhododendrons from seed. Their garden contains some 1000 species and hybrid rhododendrons! Dick also collects maples, magnolias, and other flowering trees.

Dick retired in 2000 after 38 years as a freight brakeman-conductor on the Union Pacific Railroad. He and Karen have been married for 59 years. They have two children and two grandchildren.

ZOOM Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86153706368>

ARS Willamette Chapter

The **Willamette Chapter** is currently meeting at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month via ZOOM. Their meetings take place from September through November and January through April. When possible, we will include their meeting information in this newsletter.

ARS Eureka Chapter

Vireya Rhododendrons

Speaker: Martin Monthofer

Thursday, September 23, 2021

6:30 PM, Meeting opens / 7:00 PM, Program

The Eureka Chapter will welcome Martin Monthofer from Bremen, Germany to give a program about Vireya Rhododendrons. In 1993, Martin’s dad became interested in Vireya rhododendrons and encouraged Martin’s interest. Martin made his first Vireya cross in 1999 and has made 200 crosses to date. Martin received his training at Hachmann’s Rhododendron Nursery in Barmstedt, Germany, and worked at the Alpine Nursery of Jürgen Peters in Uetersen, Germany. He began his career at Rhododendron-Park Bremen in 2000. Martin leads tours, speaks at many Rhododendron conferences in Europe and has been a speaker at the Hawaiian Chapter Vireya conference in Hawaii. This program was pre-recorded.

ZOOM Meeting Link:

<https://zoom.us/j/99120170578>

The ZOOM Link for all Eugene Meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86900120737>

October 20, 2021

January 19, 2022

November 17, 2021

February 16, 2022

December 15, 2021

March 16, 2022

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Eugene Chapter
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In Memoriam

We note with sadness the July 24th passing of Bob MacArthur, a long-time ARS member (Portland Chapter). Bob had an extensive collection of classic rhododendron hybrids, and generously provided many cuttings to Van Veen Nursery some years ago in support of a project to replace specific clones lost from the O. Howard Hinsdale Garden. A quiet conversation with this truly nice guy often resulted in some new tidbit from his expert knowledge of growing prize winning rhododendrons.

-- submitted by Gordon Wylie

ARS Eugene Chapter Officers

Terry Henderson, President
Jack Olson, Vice President
Emily Aune, Secretary
Nancy Burns, Treasurer

Directors

Helen Baxter Dana Manion
Tom Beatty Gordon Wylie
Grace Fowler-Gore

Board Meetings are held via ZOOM on the first Wednesday of the month at 10:00 am, and are open to the public.

To request the ZOOM link to the meeting, please send an email to:

ARS.EugeneChapter@gmail.com