



Potomac Valley Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

Late Summer: August 2021

Potomac Valley Chapter Calendar - 2021

- September 12 – Potomac Valley Chapter Picnic, Seneca Creek
- September 24-25 – Middle Atlantic Chapter Meeting, Richmond, VA
- September 25 – NV-ASA Annual Plant Sale, Springfield, VA
- October 23-24 – ARS Fall Symposium, Online Meeting, FREE
- November 7 – PVC Meeting, Potomac Community Center

Chapter Officers

President: Ginny Mohr
Ginnymohr63@gmail.com
Secretary: Diane Reinke
Isabelle49@aol.com
Treasurer: Phyllis Rittman
rittwoman@gmail.com

Potomac Valley Chapter Picnic *Including Elections!*

Where: Seneca Creek State Park
11950 Clopper Rd
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Date: Sunday, September 12, 2021

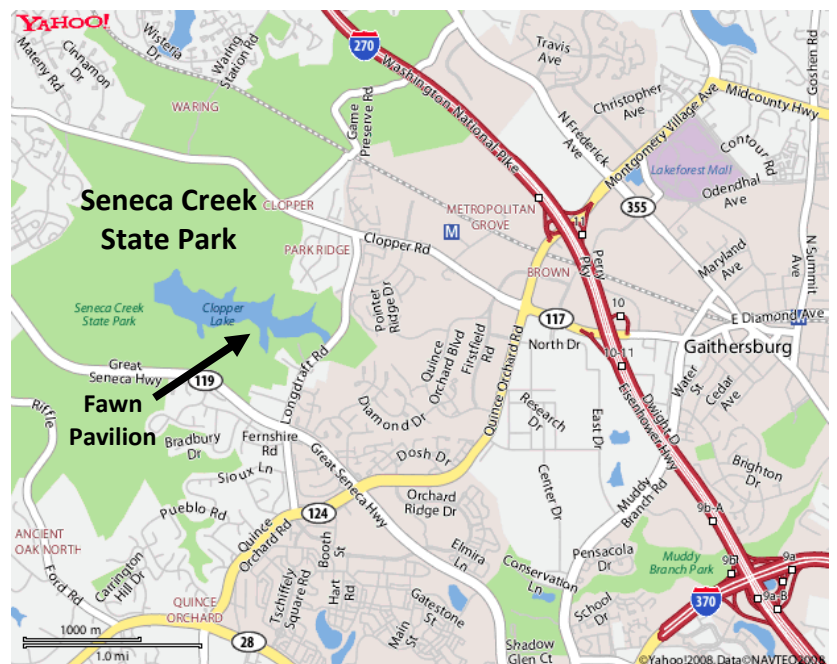
Time: 1:00 – 5:00 PM

We will be holding our first face-to-face chapter activity in over a year this fall, our annual picnic at Seneca Creek State Park. The date is Sunday, September 12, from 1 to 5 PM. We hope all of you have been vaccinated against Covid-19. Since we will be outside, this should be a fairly safe activity for us all to see one another.

The Fawn Pavilion is the large covered picnic facility we have used for many years and is located on the south side of Clopper Lake. The park does charge a nominal entry fee per person that they collect at the gate.

The chapter will provide either fried chicken or hamburgers and hotdogs depending upon attendance. We would like someone to bring ice and drinks but no alcoholic beverages as they are not allowed. The rest of us are asked to bring a side suitable for a picnic such as a salad, some veggies, a casserole, fruit, chips, or a dessert.

We will be holding elections at this event. First, we want to sincerely thank Ginny Mohr for serving as our President for so many years. Carol Segree has agreed to assume that role so we want to welcome her as our new leader. Please join us for a fun afternoon and a chance to say “Hi” to old friends. Oh, yes... We expect to have some rhododendrons for sale, too.



DIRECTIONS:

1. Take I-495 to I-270N toward Frederick
2. Merge onto I-270 Local N
3. Take the Exit #10 West, toward MD Rt. 124
4. Turn RIGHT onto MD 117 (Clopper Rd)
5. Turn LEFT into the Park: 11950 Clopper Rd

RSVP!

We will need a “head count” in order to know how much food to purchase. Please let Carol Segree know by Wednesday, September 8, if you plan to attend the picnic.

Email: csegree17@outlook.com

Sad News

It is hard to comprehend the loss of so many friends in the plant world this year. We now have the Rhododendron & Azalea News that is able to provide a more extensive tribute than was possible in the ARS Journal but we want to briefly reflect on some people we lost recently and offer our condolences to family and friends.

Harold Greer



Nancy and Harold Greer

For many of us, the tragic loss of Harold Greer was a terrible shock. He was one of the leading rhododendron experts in the world. Harold was a superb nurseryman, an accomplished author, an outstanding photographer, a prolific hybridizer, an engaging speaker, and a great friend. He will be missed more than we can know. He was 76.

His wife, Nancy, posted the following details on her Facebook page:

"Many of you may or may not know that Harold passed away 08/10/2021. He was working on the sprinkling system before last week's hot spell. He was working next to a shallow pond in our back yard and tripped and fell. His head hit a rock in the pond and it knocked him out and he drowned. He did not suffer and died in our garden. We will have a memorial service at a later date. I am doing OK. It has been such a shock! He died in a beautiful garden that he loved so much and that is where he wanted to be.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Research Foundation of the American Rhododendron Society or to The Rhododendron Species Foundation in Washington state. I will post when his memorial service will be on Facebook for you when a date is set. Thank you for all your prayers and love that some of you have sent to me already."

-Nancy Greer

Joe Minahan



Joe Minahan

Joe Minahan, an Associate Member of our chapter, passed away at his home on July 17 from colon cancer. He was 88. Joe was an avid hybridizer and we have featured him and some of his hybrids in past PVC Newsletters. He is survived by his wife, Winnie, of 61 years and five sons. The Greater Philadelphia Chapter ARS will assist in preserving his wonderful hybrids.

Phil Louer



Carolyn Beck talking with Frances and Phil Louer

Phil Louer had been in declining health recently and passed away at his home on July 24. Phil and his late wife Frances were long time members of our chapter and founding members of the ASA. At one time, they had one of the largest azalea collections in the region and kindly hosted many garden tours. Frances was Leslie Nanney's mother so we extend our sincere sympathy to Leslie and Dave for their loss. The Nanneys have a lovely garden, too. (link below)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYGoyAkUh0Y>

PVC Fall Meeting: *Karel Bernady* “Rhododendron Eclectic”

Date: November 7, 1 to 4 PM

We are scheduled for a regular meeting at the Potomac Community Center on November 7 and our speaker will be Karel Bernady. He will give his very entertaining talk called “Rhododendron Eclectic.” It has several independent segments such as one on butterflies as pollinators, and another on natural rock gardens in the Southern Appalachians like the place where *R. smokianum* grows. As is true of most indoor meetings at the moment, all attendees will be required to wear masks. More on this in our Fall newsletter.

ARS Symposium – October 23-24 “Fall into Gardening”

The ARS Chapters and Master Gardeners on Vancouver Island have put together two half-days of speakers from around the world for a virtual meeting in lieu of a fall conference. It is FREE to anyone in the world but you must register advance. See details here:

https://rhododendron.org/Fall_2021_Conference.pdf

ARS Convention – May 4-8, 2022

Registration for next year’s convention will open on November 1 but it is not too early to do some planning, Check out the details:

<https://ars2022.org/>

MAC Meeting – September 24-25

Many of our PVC Members are Associate Members of the Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS. Their fall meeting will be an overnight event at the Roslyn Retreat Center in Richmond, VA. Details and registration forms can be found here:

<https://macars.org/wordpress/>

NV-ASA Plant Sale – September 25

Our friends in the Northern Virginia Chapter ASA will hold their annual plant sale at the Kirkwood Presbyterian Church in Springfield, VA, from 1:00 to 4:30 PM:

<https://nv-asa.org/>



Mountain Hikes by *Don Hyatt*

We weren’t planning a mountain hike this year because of concerns over Covid-19. As people started getting vaccinated, we hastily resurrected a canceled trip from last year that included Steve Wright, Horticulture Director at the Jenkins Arboretum, and a number of his associates from other institutions like Mt. Cuba Center, Stoneleigh, the Tyler Arboretum, and the Davis Arboretum. We had 17 on the trip (above) including a few from PVC and the ASA, too.

Steve had permission to take cuttings from superior plants we had identified in the wild. We just had to show his group where they were.



It was not an easy hike for me. I had some problems with circulation in my legs this spring which made it difficult to walk or wear shoes. At least we managed get them to various trails and explain where the plants were. They located most of the “goodies” so it was definitely a success.

***Rhododendron maximum* – Learning to Love These Plants**

By Carol Segree (All Photos by the Author)

My first encounter with *R. maximum* came when I purchased several Rosebay Rhododendrons in the 80's. At that time, I had not joined the ARS and my only experience with rhododendrons was a large old one by the front porch at my childhood home. I now know it was 'Roseum Elegans.' It bloomed beautifully for many years until the walnut tree planted nearby encroached. My expectation for the Rosebay was something like 'Roseum Elegans.' Needless to say, I was disappointed when they bloomed.

After becoming an ARS member in the early 90's, I learned that *R. maximum* was native to the East Coast from Georgia to Canada and the state flower of West Virginia. I still wasn't excited about these plants, but two of them remained in my garden. From Don Hyatt's wonderful talks and articles, I learned about the Red Max. And I became interested. Over several years, I acquired a Red Max seedling and plants of 'Midsummer Red Max, and 'Mt. Mitchell.'

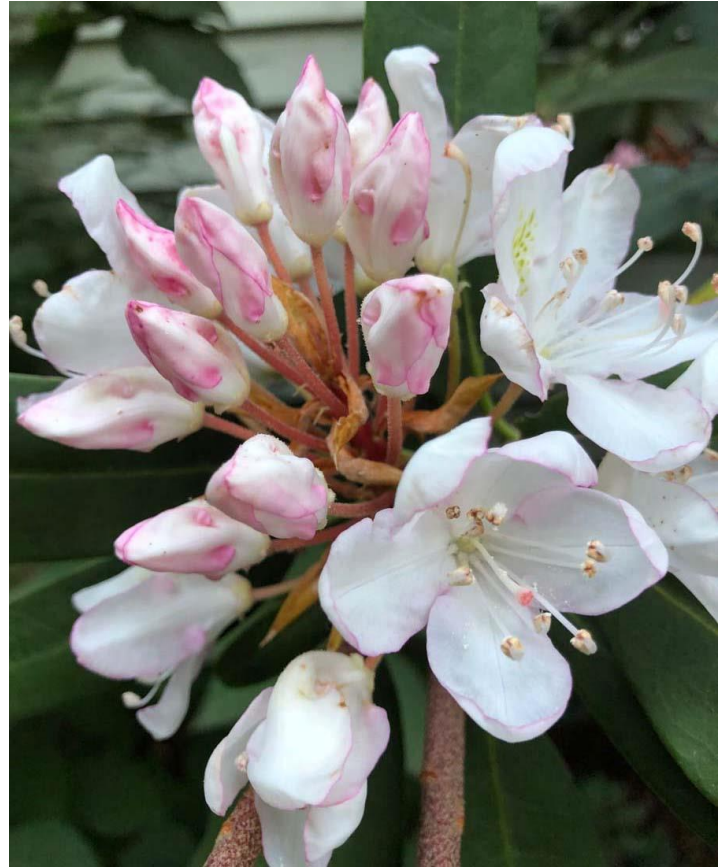
I was thrilled three years ago when the Red Max bloomed, with trusses of both white and red.

Last year it produced seven red trusses. This year there were only two. The first one was red and the second one was red with white.

Interesting! I can't wait for next year! 'Midsummer Red Max' has bloomed



Red Max Seedling



Blush Pink *R. maximum* in the Segree Garden

the last two years, but the flowers are not as striking as the Red Max. My 'Mt. Mitchell' has beautiful dark green foliage but has not bloomed. Some years ago, a seedling grew in the moss in my woods with no help from me. It has been blooming for several years and it clearly has *R. maximum* as a parent.



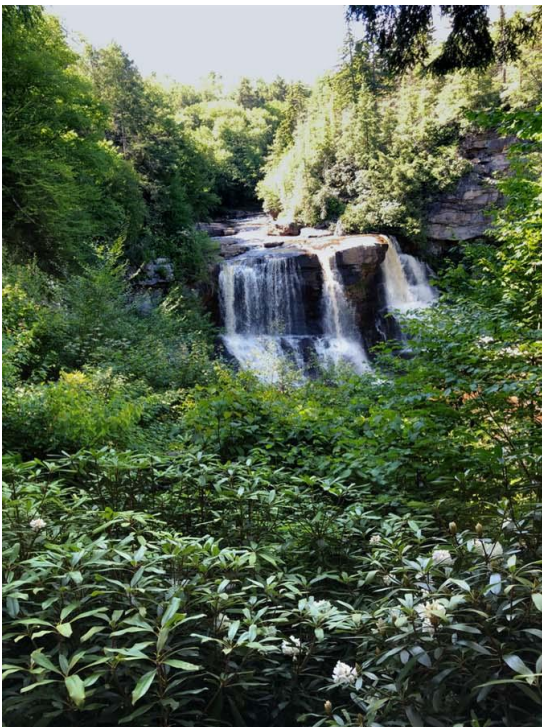
Truss of Red Max Seedling – All Red



Truss of Red Max Seedling – Red and White



Color Variations of *R. maximum*



Vista at Blackwater Falls State Park



Rhododendron maximum truss at Blackwater Falls

This summer I went on the PVC trip to the mountains and saw *R. maximum* in its native environment. Though not blooming at the time, the foliage was a joy to see. In July, Joe Miller, Halit Kardak, Barbara Bullock and I went to West Virginia to see the *R. maximum* in bloom. Our first stop was Blackwater Falls State Park, where the *R. maximums* were coming into full bloom and were stunning. Blackwater Falls, a popular tourist spot, is known for its amber waterfalls. Water in the 57' falls is tinted amber by tannic acids from hemlock and red spruce needles.

We enjoyed the beauty of the *R. maximum* in Canaan Valley and Dolly Sods and our trip was well worth the effort. These trips into the mountains have made me appreciate this species even more. What a treasure they are! Now I just wish I had the space to plant more of them.



Barbara Bullock and Carol Segree on Hooper Bald
Photo: D. Hyatt

Late Blooming Rhododendrons and Azaleas *by Don Hyatt*

'August to Frost'

One of the best late blooming evergreen azaleas for our area is a plant introduced by Norm and Jean Beaudry. It is called 'August to Frost'. It was developed by Dr. Matlack, a member of our chapter who lived in Arlington. It starts flowering in August and continues until frost.



'August to Frost' pure white form



'August to Frost' variant with red blotch

'August to Frost' is not a rebloomer. It only flowers in the late summer through the fall on new growth. It stops blooming when a freeze kills developing buds so there are no blooms next spring.

The Encore azaleas are rebloomers but are better with a longer growing season like in the south or along the Chesapeake Bay. In my garden, fall frosts can come early so they often get frozen shortly after they open their first blooms.

There are some native azaleas that flower in late summer into fall. The red *R. prunifolium* is wonderful and so is *R. arborescens* var. *georgiana*. Hybrids of the two are usually lovely pinks!



'August to Frost' plant



Encore® Autumn Debutante



Encore® Autumn Bonfire



R. arborescens var. *georgiana*



R. prunifolium



Hybrids of *R. prunifolium* and *R. arborescens* var. *georgiana*

Summer Color with Wildflower Companions *by Don Hyatt*



Spigelia marilandica and Variegated Hakone Grass

These are native plants that can provide brilliant red color to the summer garden. Although not deer proof, they are deer resistant in my garden. I do shake garlic powder on emerging shoots to discourage browsing. Bambi will taste anything.

I am very fond of *Spigelia marilandica* (Indian Pink) which I have planted along my driveway beside a sweep of yellow Variegated Hakone Grass. This is a compact selection from Pam Harper. It is slightly poisonous due to strychnine.

There is no way to miss the huge red blossoms of 'Mars Madness', a selection of native *Hibiscus moscheutos*. Flowers don't last long but buds continue to open over many weeks.

I love the tall, stately red spikes of my Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*. The hummingbirds love them, too.



Hibiscus moscheutos 'Mars Madness'



Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)

More Summer Color - *Before I Had Deer* by Don Hyatt

Coleus for Constant Color

Some people feel coleus can be gaudy but I enjoyed the summer color it added to my garden. My landscape was ablaze with rhododendrons and azaleas in the spring. Why not brighten it with accent plants and sweeps of color the rest of the season?

Each spring I toured garden centers looking for new coleus varieties to add to my collection. I always rooted cuttings of favorite forms that I carried over the winter from prior years. Yes, I liked my gaudy coleus but so did the deer. For now, I must keep my mini Buchart Gardens in pots on my deck until I can get a fence.



Some Colorful Coleus Varieties



Daylily Memories

I also used to grow a lot of daylilies before the deer took over. There are so many varieties! At first, the deer ate the buds as soon as they were about to open. Then they started eating the foliage to the ground. A single defoliation usually killed them outright.



I will replace my Daylilies when I get that fence. I am fond of the newer hybrids with large, ruffled flowers and rich colors. With over 80,000 registered cultivars, I am sure I can find a few that will speak to me.

Potomac Valley Chapter ARS - Newsletter
Donald W. Hyatt, Editor
donaldhyatt@verizon.net



**Potomac Valley Chapter
of the
American Rhododendron Society**

The Potomac Valley Chapter ARS is one of three American Rhododendron Society chapters located in District 9 which represents the Middle Atlantic region of the United States. Some chapter activities include:

- Regular Meetings with Speakers
- Annual Chapter Banquet
- Garden Tours
- Field Trips to Nurseries or to Wild Stands of Native Azaleas and Rhododendrons
- Local and National Seed Exchanges
- Plants for Members Program
- Flower Show
- Informative Chapter Newsletters
- Annual Photography Contest
- Access to Chapter Library Books

Our regular chapter meetings are usually held four times a year at the Potomac Community Center in Potomac, MD, on Sunday afternoons. However, we do hold occasional meetings at other locations in nearby Maryland, Virginia, or Washington, DC.

We encourage you to check out our chapter website which includes at least 16 years of previous newsletters that contain interesting articles, more color pictures, and examples of past activities:

www.arspvc.org

As a member of our local chapter you will also become a member at the national level of the American Rhododendron Society. This entitles you to a year's subscription of their outstanding quarterly **Journal** filled with information and many color pictures. You will also be invited to attend national conventions or regional conferences.

The cost of ARS membership is \$40 per year and includes membership in a chapter of your choice, such as our Potomac Valley Chapter. If you are already a member of another ARS Chapter, you may join the Potomac Valley Chapter as an Associate Member for only \$10 per year but you will need to identify your home chapter.

For more information about the American Rhododendron Society, check out their website:

www.rhododendron.org

**Membership Application
*American Rhododendron Society***

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Zip/Country _____

Telephone _____

E-mail: _____

Memberships are on a calendar year basis and include the local chapter membership:

Individual/Family.....	\$40.00
Student (proof of age required).....	10.00
Commercial/Corporate.....	90.00
Sustaining	75.00
Sponsoring.....	150.00
Life, single	1,000.00
Life, family.....	1,500.00
Associate Membership*.....	10.00

**Associate Members must identify home chapter*

I would like my “home” chapter to be the Potomac Valley Chapter

To join our chapter, please contact our treasurer:

**POTOMAC VALLEY CHAPTER ARS
PVC-ARS Chapter Treasurer
prittwoman@gmail.com**

You may also send this form with US Funds payable to the national organization:

**AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
P.O. Box 214
Great River, NY 11739**

To pay online by credit card, follow the link to “Membership” on the ARS website:

www.rhododendron.org

More ARS National Contact Points:

Phone (631) 533-0375, Fax (866) 883-8019

Email: member@arsoffice.org