



Potomac Valley Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

Early Spring Newsletter: March 2009

Calendar

- * **March 15, 2009** - Regular Meeting, Potomac Community Center
- * **April 30 - May 3, 2009** - National Convention, Everett, WA
- * **May 1, 2009** - Joint Flower Show, ASA Convention, Herndon, VA
- * **May 1 - 4, 2009** - ASA Convention, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Herndon
- * **May 30, 2009** - Sandwich Club Meeting on Cape Cod, MA

Chapter Officers

President: Bob McWhorter

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Vice-President: Richard Mohr

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Treasurer: Phyllis Rittman

prittman@erols.com

Next Meeting: March 15, 2009

Ron Rabideau: Plant Hunting in Siberia

Where: Potomac Community Center

Time: 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Our next meeting will be held again at the Potomac Community Center. The date is Sunday afternoon, March 15, 2009. Normally, our meetings run from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. However, we will also have an informal “Garden Shop Talk” session from 12:00 noon to 1:00 PM as described below. Our speaker’s presentation will begin at 1:30 PM and we will hold a short, but important business meeting afterwards.

Many of you already know our speaker, **Ron Rabideau**. He is part of the indispensable team at Hank Schannen’s RareFind Nursery:

www.rarefindnursery.com

Ron knows everything about rhododendrons, and he has been on a number of plant exploration trips including treks to India and the Himalayas, some of which you may have seen already. We are very excited to hear about Ron’s most recent trip to collect hardy rhododendrons from Russia and Siberia.

Garden Shop Talk: 12:00 noon to 1:00 PM

Our members are invited to arrive early for an informal ‘Garden Shop Talk’ session at the Potomac Community Center to be held immediately preceding our regularly scheduled meeting on March 15th.

Master Gardener Joe Marsala and Bob McWhorter will discuss a variety of timely garden subjects including key pests in our gardens, monitoring techniques, non-chemical and chemical controls and related safety precautions. Come join in the Shop Talk. Bring your questions and personal experiences. Learn what can be done now to avoid problems later.

Garden Shop Talk is a new feature of PVC meetings. Future sessions will be led by Joe Marsala, Carol Segree, Bob McWhorter, Don Hyatt, and others. Questions are welcomed and members are encouraged to suggest topics and share how they keep their gardens healthy and beautiful.



R. dauricum album – A hardy species from Siberia

Directions:

Potomac Community Center

11315 Falls Road

Potomac, MD 20854

For most people, this should be a fairly convenient place and not much difference in travel time compared to our normal meetings at the National Arboretum.

From the Capital Beltway, **I-495**, take **I-270 North**. After the two spurs join depending upon whether you are heading from the eastern side of the beltway or from the south, continue on I-270 N but keep to the right for local traffic.

?? Get in lanes designated **I-270 North, Local**.

?? Take exit **#4B/ MONTROSE RD WEST**

?? Continue west on Montrose Rd. for **1.7 mi**

?? Turn **LEFT** on **FALLS RD (MD-189)**

?? Continue **1.4 mi** to 11315 Falls Rd on the Left

Refreshment Duty: Persons whose last names begin with **Q** through **Z** are asked to bring some refreshment goodies for the table.

Joint Flower Show: May 1 - 3

Our Potomac Valley Chapter Flower Show will be held this year in conjunction with the 2009 Azalea Society Convention at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 2200 Centreville Rd, Herndon, VA, 20170. You do not have to be involved in the convention to participate. Just bring your flowers to the hotel on Friday, May 1st, which is located at the Intersection of the Dulles Access Road (Rt 267) and Centreville Road.

Building on the approach used by the Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS, Don Voss has been working on a set of rules that will help when entering flowers in the show. Essentially, all you will need to do is decide whether your entry is an azalea or rhododendron and what its name is, and the flower show committee will take it from there. The committee can help there, too.

Entries will be accepted by the Flower Show Committee in the lobby area outside of the Hotel meeting rooms on Friday afternoon, May 1, 2009, between 2:00 PM and 6:30 PM. Exhibitors are responsible for filling out entry cards accurately and legibly. The Committee will place entries in the appropriate classes, grouping them by color.

There are only eight classes (listed below), four for rhododendrons and four for azaleas. They are:

Class 1 - Lepidote Rhododendron Species

(Small leaf, or "scaly" types)

Examples: *R. keiskei*, *R. dauricum*, *R. minus* var. *carolinianum*, *R. impeditum*, *R. mucronulatum*

Class 2 - Lepidote Rhododendron Hybrids

(Small leaf, or "scaly" types)

Examples: 'Crater Lake', 'PJM', 'Windbeam', 'Mary Fleming', 'Olga', 'Aglo', 'Pioneer', 'Ramapo'

Class 3 - Elepidote Rhododendron Species

(Large leaf types)

Examples: *R. metternichii* (*R. degronianum* ssp. *heptamerum*), *R. fortunei*, *R. yakushimanum*.

Class 4 - Elepidote Rhododendron Hybrids

(Large leaf types)

Examples: 'Taurus', 'Wheatley', 'Roseum Elegans', 'Janet Blair', 'Cadis', 'Gigi', 'Bellringer', 'Calsap'

Class 5 - Deciduous Azalea Species

Examples: *R. calendulaceum*, *R. schlippenbachii*, *R. austrinum*, *R. periclymenoides*, *R. vaseyi*

Class 6 - Deciduous Azalea Hybrids

Examples: 'Chetco', 'Gibraltar', 'Marina', 'Cecile', 'Goldflakes', 'Rosy Lights', 'Admiral Semmes'

Class 7 - Evergreen Azalea Species

Examples: *R. kiusianum*, *R. kaempferi*, *R. indicum*, *R. stenopetalum*, *R. nakaharae*

Class 8 - Evergreen Azalea Hybrids

Examples: 'Glacier', 'Ben Morrison', 'Coral Bells', 'Quakeress', 'Pink Pearl', 'Dream', 'Nancy of Robinhill'



2008 Flower Show Winners

Judging will occur Friday evening after final entries have been placed and the Committee has completed arrangement of the exhibit. Within each class or subdivision of a class, ribbons may be awarded: Blue (First Place), Red (Second Place), and White (Honorable Mention). Rosettes will be awarded for Best Rhododendron, Best Azalea, and Best-in-Show. Following the judging, the show will be open for viewing. Awards will be formally acknowledged during the Banquet, Sunday evening, May 3, 2009.

We will need people from our chapter to help stage the show and also bring flowers. Bob McWhorter will be asking for volunteers during our business meeting.

Official Entry Rules:

1. The exhibitor must be a member of the American Rhododendron Society or the Azalea Society of America.
2. Only *one entry* of a *variety* may be made by any individual. There is *no limit* to the number of different varieties that may be entered in a class.
3. Rhododendron and azalea entries exhibited must be grown and wintered outdoors under ordinary garden conditions and must have been in the possession of the exhibitor for at least six months.
4. An elepidote (large-leaf) rhododendron entry shall be a cut truss from a single terminal bud. Not all of the flower buds in a truss need to be open.
5. An azalea or lepidote ("scaly") rhododendron entry shall be a single-stem spray not to exceed 15 inches in height and width above the container. Sprays may not be artificially constrained above the top of the container.
6. Entries should be properly groomed and conditioned. Only water may be used for cleaning leaves. Damaged leaves may be completely and neatly removed; trimming of leaves is not permitted.
7. Exhibitors may claim their awards at the end of the convention on Sunday evening.

Sandwich Club 2009: May 30, 2009

The annual Sandwich Club meeting will be held this year on Saturday, May 30th at the Heritage Museums and Gardens in Sandwich, MA. In addition, there will be open private gardens on Friday and Monday and a trip to Martha's Vineyard on Sunday.

The Saturday meeting/plant auction starts at 10 AM and lasts until 12 noon or slightly later. There is a cafe located at the site where you can get a sandwich for lunch and then an afternoon guided tour of the Dexter, Consolini and Cowles collections has been planned. If you are attending the meeting on Saturday, Heritage has waived the admission fee to the gardens.

This year, we have made arrangements for a private tour of the Polly Hill Arboretum on Martha's Vineyard on Sunday, May 31st. This is an all day trip catching the Martha's Vineyard ferry at Woods Hole at 10 AM. We have contracted a bus to deliver us to the arboretum and bring us back at 3 PM. The associated costs for this trip will be \$10 per car for parking at the Woods Hole ferry terminal, a \$15 per passenger round trip ferry cost and a \$10 bus charge from the ferry terminal to the arboretum and back. The tour is limited to 43 people, so we suggest that you get your reservations to Norman Beaudry in early:

beaunorm@verizon.net

You are welcome to go on your own to Martha's Vineyard via the ferry, but the cost for an automobile under 17' in length is \$135 round trip, and reservations should be made well in advance. Additional passengers in your car are extra.

On the Friday and Monday before and after the weekend, there will be open garden tours at nearby Pilkington, Delano, White, and Gingras gardens. We know that a large number from Potomac Valley are planning to attend this year and hope that there will be some that will be coming with us for the first time .

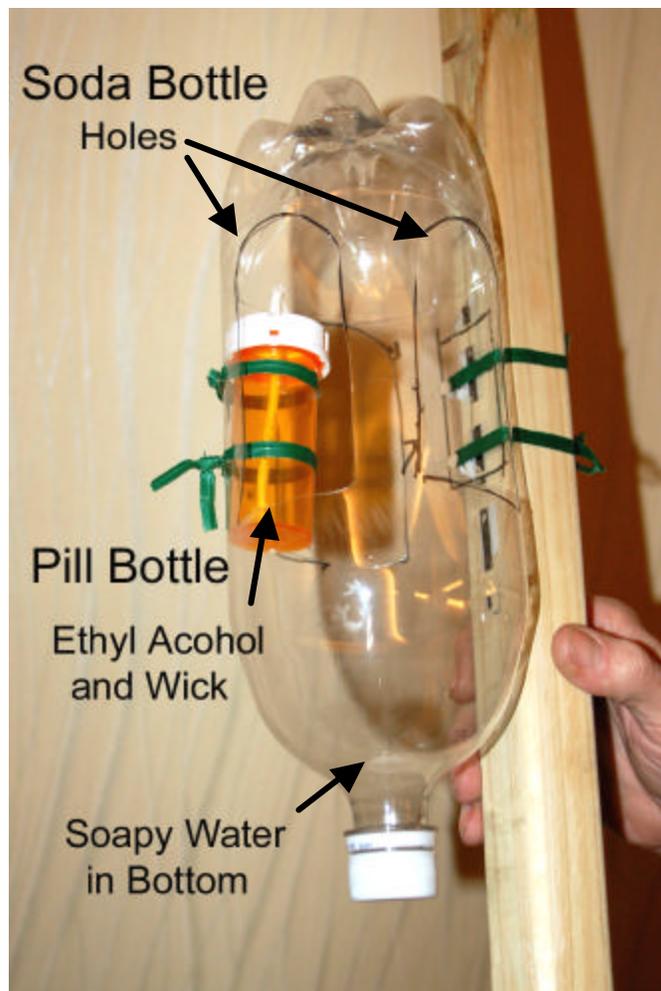
Ambrosia Beetle Traps

At our September meeting, Bob McWhorter presented an excellent program on a threatening new insect pest in our region, the Asian Ambrosia Beetle, *Xylosandrus crassiusculus*. Although the insect itself is very tiny and doesn't look like it should do much damage, when the adults emerge in early spring they bore small holes in a variety of host plants to lay their eggs. The hole the insect bores is only 2 mm across, and there is usually some delicate, toothpick-like frass exuding from the opening. That hole shouldn't cause much damage to the plant, but at the same time the insect also infects the host plant with a fungus and that causes the problem since it will kill the plant. There is no known cure for the fungus, and insecticides cannot kill the larva inside, either.

We thought it would be good to remind our members to get ready to monitor your gardens by

building your own Ambrosia Beetle Traps. The traps should be set out in March, a few days before the temperatures are likely to hit 70° F. The first flight of these destructive insects is typically between March 11 and April 10 in our area. If insects are found, there are some rather poisonous sprays can be applied to the bark of susceptible trees and shrubs that will kill the adults before they bore through the bark. After they are inside, there is little that can be done to kill them.

Traps can be made from an inverted, 2-liter soda bottle. Cut three holes cut in the side to allow easy entry for the beetles. Fill a pill bottle with ethyl alcohol and insert a wick in the top since that will act



Ambrosia Beetle Trap

as a chemical lure to attract beetles to the trap. Attach the pill bottle inside the soda bottle as shown above.

Then put some soapy water in the bottom of the soda bottle since that will trap the insects as they fly into the trap, and fall to the bottom. Check the traps often for insects.



Asian Ambrosia Beetles

Other Spring Activities:

North Carolina Nursery Trek: March 6 - 8

Several nurseries in Southern Virginia and North Carolina have started holding "Open Houses" in late February and early March. It is a time when many of us have serious spring fever, so we have been heading down there to buy plants we don't need. Some of these nurseries are primarily mail order firms, but they do allow visitors a few times a year.

Many of us have been heading down there on our own, but Joe Marsala offered to organize a more structured field trip this year with the following itinerary for Potomac Valley Chapter people and friends who would like to "hang out" as a group. Some of the nurseries are not normally open on Sundays but Joe has made special arrangements for us. Thanks, Joe!

Most of us will be staying near Raleigh-Durham for two nights, March 6 and 7, at the following motel:

Comfort Inn – Garner

126 Cleveland Crossing Drive, Garner, NC 27529
(919) 773-1110

Here is the list of nurseries we will visit and when:

Friday, March 6:

Pine Knot Farms – Hellebore Festival (10 am – 4 pm)
681 Rockchurch Rd, Clarksville, VA 23927

www.pineknotfarms.com

Saturday, March 7:

Big Bloomers Flower Farm (Saturday morning)
275 Pressly Foushee Road, Sanford, NC 27330

www.bigbloomersflowerfarm.com

Plant Delights Nursery (Saturday afternoon)
9241 Sauls Road, Raleigh, NC 27603

www.plantdelights.com

Sunday, March 8:

Camellia Forrest Nursery (Sunday at 10:00 AM)
9701 Carrie Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27516

www.camforest.com

Niche Gardens (Sunday afternoon)

1111 Dawson Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27516

www.nichegardens.com

If you would like join us and would like more details including directions, contact Joe Marsala:

joe-marsala@comcast.net

Hooper Bald Project: April 3 – 5

The species study group of the Middle Atlantic Chapter is planning their first work session to help restore Hooper Bald, a mountaintop southwest of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. They will be staying in nearby Robbinsville, NC, and will try to

clear small trees and shrubs that are endangering some superior forms of the Flame azalea, *R. calendulaceum*, growing there. They would like people from many other chapters join them in this endeavor. Contact Jim Brant for more details:

jandpbrant@verizon.net

Check out the MAC website for details:

www.macars.org/hooperbald.html

ARS National Convention: April 29 – May 3 Everett, Washington

The American Rhododendron Society convention is being hosted on the west coast this year by the chapters in District 2. Check out their website for a detailed schedule, tour options, speakers, and registration materials. Late registration deadline is April 1st.

www.ars-2009-convention.org

ASA National Convention: May 1-4 Herndon, Virginia

The 2009 Azalea Society Convention is being hosted by the Northern Virginia Chapter ASA. For more details on the flower being sponsored by our own Potomac Valley Chapter as well as schedule of events, hotel information, directions, speakers, garden tours, and registration forms, check out their website. Deadline for early registration is March 15.

www.donaldhyatt.com/asa2009

MAC Spring Meeting: May 8-10 Roanoke, VA

The Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS is hosting a spring meeting this year in Roanoke, VA. They have a full program including speakers and a tour the garden of Paul James. Afterwards, members of their Species Study Group will be heading south to the Pisgah Inn from May 10-12 to admire *R. vaseyi* in the wild. For more information and registration forms, check out their website:

www.macars.org

Miscellaneous Notes

We had 55 entries in the 2009 Photography Contest. Top winners were Don Hyatt, Jon Wallenmeyer, Bill Wallenmeyer, and Dan Neckel but every entrant got a prize. Color photos will be printed in the next issue.

Phyllis Rittman has updated the membership roster which is included with this mailing. Addresses for those who requested "privacy" were purposely left blank. People who did not renew are no longer listed.

Don Hyatt is late in mailing seed exchange orders. He is almost done and apologizes for the delay. Sorry!

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