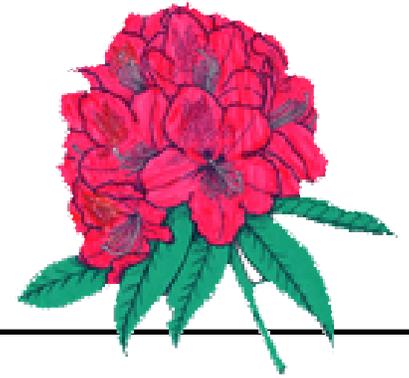


Noyo News



Noyo Chapter

American Rhododendron Society
March 2013

Wednesday, March. 27, 7:00
Presbyterian Church
367 So. Sanderson Way, FB

Back to Our Roots

*"To be a successful farmer one must first know the nature of the soil."
Xenophon, 400 B.C.*

Sam Polly works for Streamline Planning Consultants where he helps in planning to keep development enterprises moving forward through regulatory barriers. He also specializes in edible landscaping and wildlife habitat design.

Throughout all of his environmental work, soil remain the critical hub to support the plants that produce food, hold the soil and treat storm water. Sam draws from his bachelors degrees from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and several years as a Bay Area arborist to help create successful projects. Sam's current project is to pioneer the Third Corner Movement which involves maximizing idle spaces and landscapes by incorporating unique edible plantings to create a more sustainable community.

Even with good advice and proper application, localized soil problems can often negate actions taken by gardeners. Sam's presentation this month will take us on a walk through the process of determining what our soils need and some of the tricks to help plants grow, as well as some of the soil basics to maximize success for all of our planting efforts.

Studying the soil is not a new concept. While paying lip service to its importance it behoves all of us to learn more about our soils.

Some Chapter Needs

It's getting closer to our annual Show. Remember, this year we're **judging on Friday, May 10**, at 3 p.m. so all of our normal activities will be influenced by our different Show hours (9 to 5 on both Sat. and Sun.)

•With the extended Show hours we need more volunteers for the hospitality booth. Contact Shirley Kelley (937-1550 or spckelley@att.net). We'll also need more refreshments.

•For the membership table and delivering bottles to the local inns contact Terry Giomi (964-4435 or tjgiomi@aol.com).

•Many other endeavors (e.g. tent set-up, transporting tables and bottles, trophies and ribbons, Show set-up, etc) need to get done. If you'd like to help contact Jim Celeri (813-1868).

Entries will be accepted at the MCBG between 9 and 1 on Friday, or between 5 and 7 on Thursday. Once the tent is set up earlier in the week entries can be left there.

Debates, conventions, endless ads and polls are part of the scene in politics. Things operate a little differently in the Noyo Chapter but the rationale for our annual election of officers is the same. We need leaders! There are many things that keep the chapter operating. Some involve ongoing commitment, while some are very short and goal oriented. It simply is not right to continue to ask the same people year after year to do all the work.

The following is an editorial opinion by your editor.

The Noyo Chapter needs your involvement. It's time!

A Late Christmas

You have some unique opportunities to get some of those things that didn't get left under your tree last Dec.

Dennis McKiver went up to Oregon and got plants for our Show Sale in May. He submitted the note in the next column. The list of plants is on page 3.

Also available at Dennis' home are several varieties of pieris and some other plants from Bob Boddy's nursery. They're free to a good home.

Rosalie Stanley reports that Peter Shick's daughter, Linda, wants to give her

There is never going to be a better time to add to your rhododendron collection or do some landscaping than now. We have just purchased over 500 one gallon plants consisting of over 100 different varieties of rhododendrons. Most of these are rhododendrons that have not been available locally in the past. Many are new hybrids. They will be available to members at a special price before the show. We want you to purchase your plants now, because it's the best time to plant them and we want you to spend your time at the Show helping out and enjoying the Show rather than worrying about buying plants.

Right now, you get the first pick of the lot. We only have 5 of each variety, so many of these plants won't last long. Don't wait too long to come pick yours out. Come get one of each.

You already have too many rhododendrons? Nonsense! There is no such thing as too many rhododendrons. No more room? Not an excuse. Many of these rhododendrons are small dwarf plants, suitable for your rock garden, mass plantings under your larger rhododendrons or for rhododendron bonsai.

The pre-show member prices are: \$9 each, 5 for \$40, or 10 for \$75. Buy 10 and that's only \$7.50 each. The plants will be available at Dennis McKiver's house. Please call, 813-8383, to go look at the plants and pick out the ones you want.

father's conifers to our members. Some are very rare. Contact Linda (962-9388). Rosalie (367-0720) can give you information.

Lastly, Chuck Preisig has some large piles of well seasoned chips available to whomever wants to drive up and load up. Contact Chuck (964-6015) to arrange.

Noyo Chapter Minutes ***Show Meeting***

February 27, 2013

- Extra ribbons are always needed. Members should return them if they don't want theirs.
- Maryann Payne from the Botanical Gardens suggested that more small posters for the Show be placed around town.
- Check-in times for Show entries will be from 5 to 7 on Thursday and 9 to 1 Friday and will be noted in the April newsletter and articles in the newspaper.
- Nadja will co-chair the raffle but needs help.
- High neck bottles are needed and can be brought to Terry or to a meeting.
- It was agreed to sell food again this year (hot dogs, chili, sandwiches etc.) and nonalcoholic beverages.

Submitted by Rosalie Stanley, Secretary

General Meeting

February 27, 2013

- Bobby Anderson, Jay McMartin, Mary Anderson, Tyler, Diane and Janet were introduced.
- Minutes from the January meeting were approved. Reba/Shirley (ms)
- It was reported that Barbara Smith and Nannette Giomi were doing well after their surgeries and Bruce Philp had been sick but was doing well also.
- Thanks to Rosalie, Joyce and Shirley who brought in refreshments.
- A nominating committee needs to be formed for next years officers.
- Don Wallace from McKinleyville presented an interesting program on growing rhododendrons successfully.
- The raffle included many nice plants.

Submitted by Rosalie Stanley, Secretary

Voles, not Moles

The California vole (*Microtus californicus*) is a type of vole which lives throughout much of California. It is also known as the "California meadow mouse". In Oregon there are different species but their behavior mirrors our voles.

Having lost plants to voles your editor found this article interesting. It was published by Frances Burns in the Eugene Chapter newsletter and is reprinted here with her permission.

AN INTRODUCTION TO MY NEW "BEST FRIEND" – THE VOLE

Give me your coyotes, foxes, skunks, and snakes, and while you're at it, some owls, hawks, cats, weasels and even a great blue heron or two. Considering the fact that my garden has been invaded by a legion of short-lived tiny critters that can breed at one month of age, have several litters a year, from spring to fall, with up to 9 babies in a 21-24 day gestational period, I need all the help I can get.

In pursuit of knowledge I learned that Prairie Voles in the Midwest have "family values" – they are monogamous for life, both parents provide superb parental care, and the kids are allowed to hang around for several weeks after weaning. On the other hand, the Montana Vole, with a genetic difference of only 1%, is a perennial bachelor in a relentless chase of any and all female voles, taking leave immediately after conquest, having no desire for family ties. To quote information from Emory University researchers, Doctors Inslee and Wang, "there are subtle differences in their hormone systems that when manipulated lead to these good values/bad values differences. Their research may lead to treatment for people with social disorders. So while we may be ruining the voles in our gardens, we should tip our hats to the Midwest prairie voles that may show us a way to a better future." Now that's forgiveness!

Washington State passed a bill in 2000 that made body-grabbing traps illegal; and the state registers no rodenticides for homeowners. We two-legged creatures create ideal habitats for the voles, and if like what we have created, and the voles like them as well, it's apparent we just have to learn to get along. Alternatively, California declared war on the California meadow vole, allowing fatal consequences.

Despite a resident coyote cruising the fields and four cats bringing home their catches for our examination and praise, we have a problem with voles slowly killing rhododendrons – favorites such as 'Razorbill', *Roxianum oreonastes*, and *R. quinquefolium*, plus a beautiful unknown variety. Fortunately, I was able to get cuttings before they died. The plants had small boroughs threading through the roots and evidence of thirst, and no amount of water made a difference. I knew it wasn't moles as there were no mounds of soft soil and moles don't eat roots or bulbs. Voles! This will require

closer inspection of the corpses the cats' drag home.

In the Pacific Northwest two vole species are prominent; both belong to the same family, Muridae, as mice and rats – not the same family as moles, who are insectivores in the Family Talpidae. The Oregon Meadow Vole, *Microtis oregoni* or Creeping Meadow Vole, likely to be found in forested areas, is small, short-haired, and brown with a silver belly. They range from 4.75 to 6.25 inches including the 1 to 2 inch tail. With a gestational period of 23 days, they have four or five litters of 3 or 4 babies a year. **They love conifer trees and clean cut and grassy habitat** on higher slopes. They dine on green vegetation, blueberries and other berries – Oregon Grape, Salal and Salmon Berries come to mind – and subterranean fungi. Their shallow burrows can be seen outlined here, there and everywhere. They nest underground, and sometimes in hollow logs, bark or piles of garden debris and are found from the coast to the Cascade Mountains. I suspect I have a melding of both species, since we are so fortunate having both habitats, likely developed since gardening and irrigation were introduced to a dry savanna with a small wetland area some 60 years ago.

Townsend's Vole, *Microtis townsendi* is found primarily on the coast and in the Coast Range in wetlands. Dark brown, with some black on top, perhaps, and gray or grayish brown on their belly, their tail is longer as voles go, and dark, as are their feet. Their big ears stick up above their rough fur. Including tail, they ranges from 6.5 to 9.25 inches; with the tail 1.75 to 3.25 inches long. Their body depth from belly to back is one inch or less. Marshes and thick moist vegetation provides their homestead as they raise several litters annually of up to nine, gestating 21 to 24 days. Their preferred diet consists of grasses, horsetail, alfalfa, clover, rushes, sedges and buttercups, with stored small bulbs for winter. If summer vegetation is thick enough to hide and nest in, they don't go underground. Hence my knee-high rubber boots when on safari in tall grasses, accompanied at times by well-tuned shrieks of "_____".

Information in this article was obtained online at <http://www.austingwatson.com/mg/voles.htm>.

Noyo Chapter Rhododendron of the Month: ‘Rubicon’

(Submitted by Dennis McKiver)

(‘Noyo Chief’ x ‘Kilimanjaro’)

Raised by R. C. Gordon in New Zealand and registered in 1979

Seed Parent: *R. arboreum ssp nilagiricum* ‘Noyo Chief’ x ‘Kilimanjaro’ (*R. elliottii* x ‘Dusty Maid Group’)

Dusty Maid is: (‘Moser’s Maroon’ x *R. fortunei ssp discolor*)

Rubicon was selected as the 2013 elepidote rhododendron of the year for our Southwest Region. Rubicon has fantastic deep blood red flowers with black spotting on the upper lobes. The truss holds 17-18 flowers. Leaves are very lush, shiny, medium size and deeply veined. It grows to a height of 3-5 feet in 10 years. It usually blooms early midseason (Apr-May), but this year, due to the mild winter, it starting blooming in some of our yards in Fort Bragg in February. It often blooms throughout the blooming season from February through May. The flowers are heavy textured and make great cut flowers for the house. They last a long time in a vase. It seems the cold hardiness rating varies depending on who you reference from -5° F (SHN) to 10° F (Greer). Greer gives the plant a quality rating of 5 (Best there is) for flower and a 4 for plant and foliage and says that it’s “A superior plant that is exceptional”. I wholeheartedly agree and I agree with Don Wallace of Singing Tree Nursery when he says that “If you only buy one rhododendron, buy Rubicon”. If you like red, you will love this one. If you don’t have Rubicon in your collection then you need to get it. For our March meeting Ken Jones will bring in a Rubicon for our plant raffle and have more for sale from his Forest Lane Nursery.



Abe Arnot	Elsie Frye	Landmark	Point Fosdick	Small Gem
April Glow	Eruption	Lavender Princess	Polarnacht	Solidarity
Belva’s Joy	Fabia	Lavender Haze	Pontiyak	Songbird
Besse Howells	Fantastica	Lavendula	Princess Ann	Starbright
Black Eye	Firerim	Lem’s Stormcloud	Purple Passion	Champagne
Black Magic	Francesca	Lemon Dream	Queen Alice	Summer Wind
Blaney’s Blue	Ginny Gee	Manitou	<i>R. burmanicum</i> x	Strawberry
Blue Angel	Gordon Jones	Mardi Gras	lindyii	Chiffon
Blue Baron	Grace Seabrook	Mary Flemming	<i>R. davidsonianum</i>	Sugar Puff
Bob’s Blue	Hachmann’s Polaris	Midnight	<i>R. glacophyllum</i>	Tualitin Beauty
Brickdust	Hill’s Bright Red	Mist Maiden	<i>R. racemosum</i>	True Blue
Brittany	Honey Butter	Mother Greer	Ramapo	Very Berry
Bubble Gum	Hot Dawn	Nancy Evans	Red Gold	Vibrant Violet
Calsap	Hotei	Night Editor	Ria Hardizer	Vulcan Sun
Candy Stripe	Jingle Bells	Northern Starburst	Sapphire	Whitney’s Orange
Capistrano	Johnathan Shaw	Nova Zembla	Sappho X Tweety	Whitney Purple
Checkmate	Kaberett	Noyo Dream	Bird	Windbeam
Chickor	Kalinka	Ocean Lake	Satsop Sunrise	Winsome
Coral Mist	Karin	Olga Mezitt	Seaview Sunset	Wissihikon
Cotton Candy	Kaye Player	Phyllis Korn	Sheer Enjoyment	Yaku Angel
Cream Crest	Ken Janeck	Pink Jeans	Siltcoos Sunrise	Yaku Hoppy
Crete	Kimberly	Pink Snowflakes	Silver Skies	
Dreamy Cream	Kimbeth	PJM Compacta	Skookum	

Noyo Chapter, ARS Officers & Chairpersons

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Editor	Dick Jones	964-4353, dic@mcn.org

*Board of Directors

Mark Your Calendars

2012-2013 Meeting Schedule

Meetings typically are at the Presbyterian Church in Fort Bragg **starting at 7:00 pm.** **Show Com.** meetings are at 6:00 preceding each general meeting.

•Wednesday, March 27
Sam Polly, "Your Soils"

•Wednesday, April 24
Show Preparation

•Fri., Sat., Sun., May 10 - 12

Noyo Show & Plant Sale

Judging on Friday, 3 p.m.

Saturday, May 18 *Spring Potluck*

April 20-21, 2013

Cal Chapter Show and Sale

April 26-28, 2013

Eureka Chapter Show and Sale

May 1-5, 2013

ARS Convention, Olympia/Tacoma

Noyo Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

P.O. Box 1068

Fort Bragg, CA 95437-1068

The Noyo Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society's 2013 Specialty Raffle

The raffle supports the Fort Bragg annual Rhododendron Show. Enter to win a professionally landscaped rhododendron garden valued at over \$1,000 donated by:

Celeri & Son Nursery

Ten 5-gallon rhododendrons will be expertly planted on your Mendocino county property. Tickets are \$10.00 each and are available at Hare Creek, Fiddler's Green, and North Star Nurseries. They are also available at Harvest Market and at the Rhododendron Show on May 11-12 at the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens.

Drawing to be held Sunday, May 12, 2013 after the Rhododendron Show.