

THE RHODODENDRON NEWSLETTER

JULY 2008

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Australian Rhododendron Society, Victorian Branch Inc. (A5896Z)

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AUGUST

SATURDAY 2ND 10.00AM-3.00PM

Pakenham Garden Club Garden Expo

At Pakenham Racecourse (Racecourse Rd Pakenham)

The ARS will have a stand selling rhododendrons.

FRIDAY 15TH 2008

General Meeting at Nunawading Horticultural Centre at 8.00pm

Speaker: Ian Wallace has a special interest in Big Leaf Rhododendrons and will share some of his expert knowledge with us.

SEPTEMBER

SATURDAY 6TH 2008

Vireya Group 10am-12noon; at Mike and Inge hammer's House. Ring Simon Begg

SUNDAY 14TH 10.00AM-5.00PM

VIREYA SALE & DISPLAY DAY

OLINDA HALL

Cnr Olinda-Monbulk Rd & The Georgian Rd

FRIDAY 19TH 2008

General Meeting at Nunawading Horticultural Centre at 8.00pm

Speaker: Graham Price will let us into some of his secrets of hybridizing vireyas.

OCTOBER

SATURDAY 4TH & SUNDAY 5TH

ARSV AZALEA SHOW

The HALL, NATIONAL RHODODENDRON GARDENS

The Georgian Road Olinda

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Well, here we are again. It feels like yesterday that I was sitting at the computer typing up the last report. Though, given my memory these days, it probably was yesterday! It never ceases to amaze me that my parents didn't warn me about this ageing process. I guess if their memories were as bad as mine, they probably forgot!

At our June General Meeting, Kristen Jackson, Managing Curator of the Olinda Rhododendron Garden, conducted a workshop on "Planning for the future of the Dandenong Ranges Gardens". Members present were divided into small working groups and all were asked to put their "thinking caps" on and note points that the group considered important for the forward planning of the Olinda Garden.

Parks-Vic. will work on this information and advise the Society of the results at a future date.

Members may recall that the Azalea Show did not take place last October due to the declining interest by Exhibitors. Committee has decided to give it another go this year but its success will depend on exhibitors supporting the Show by entering their blooms. If the support is not there, then the Show will be cancelled again next year.

October 4th & 5th are the dates to remember and the venue is, of course, the Show Hall at Olinda.

All the little problems with the website seem to be sorted out and the site can now be "Googled". If you haven't had a chance to look at the site yet, the address is www.vicrhodo.org.au.

Don't forget on Sunday, September 14, the Volunteer Group are organising a Vireya Sale Day at the Olinda Community Hall on the corner of The Georgian Road, adjacent to the football oval.

Committee is currently working on ideas for our Christmas lunch which will be held on Sunday, December 7, at 12.30pm. Inge & Mike Hammer have offered their home as a venue and we are following up with Caterers for menus and pricing etc. If you have any ideas or alternative suggestions, please contact a Committee member as soon as possible. Committee is always looking for suggestions for this function and we would welcome new ideas. A change is as good as a holiday and a lot cheaper!

Here in Gembrook, we have had some good rain over the past few weeks and the garden is starting to bloom again! Spring is supposedly still some time off, but we have had jonquils and daffodils in flower since March. A row of Daphne at the back of the house is in full bloom and the perfume is wonderful. Rhododendrons are starting to flower and August Moon, Pink Delight and Crest Ann are in full bloom. Lem's 121 and Margaret Dunn finished flowering weeks ago. All in all the head gardener, John, is starting to look a lot more cheerful and when the head gardener is in a good mood, then yours truly is as well. Roll on Spring!

That's all for now, take care and take some time out to start smelling the flowers.

Carole Quinn.

THE SPECIES COLUMN.

bureavii -Subsection Taliensia. [photo page 9]

Rhododendron *bureavii* has possibly the most striking foliage in the genus. The underside of the leaves is initially covered in a pinkish-beige indumentum which turns to a rich red-brown at maturity. The indumentum is believed to act like a woolly blanket to protect the leaves from cold and dehydration at high altitudes. It is said to be one of the easiest plants to grow in the Taliensia Subsection and does well at Olinda. The flowers are also attractive and are usually white flushed pink in neat trusses. It usually forms a stocky tree up to 3 metres.

Name:

Named after Edouard Bureau, French Professor (1830-1918).

Distribution:

N. Yunnan (3000-3900 metres) in open forests and thickets.

Characteristics:

All species in the Taliensia Subseries have a thick indumentum, but *bureavii* has a very woolly and richly-coloured variation. The stems, buds, and petioles are also covered in indumentum, which is absent in similar species like *elegantulum* and *pachysanthum*.

Selected Forms.

The R.H.S. have made awards to three forms:

A.M. 1939. Exbury form. Flowers white, flushed rose with crimson spots.

A.M. 1972. Wakehurst form. As a foliage plant.

A.M. 1988. Cox's form. Truss of 10-11 white flowers, heavily spotted red.

Hybrids

None listed by the R.H.S. Perhaps it was difficult to improve on the original species.

Where to See These Plants:

There are nine plants listed on our database, but we have only found four in our G.P.S. survey.

These can be found as follows:

Two plants near the Maddenia Walk, below the small toilet.

One plant near the rock wall past the Moorland garden.

One plant near the the Gazebo on the creek.

There is another without a label which looks like *bureavii*.

Alan Kepert.

VIREYA SPECIES COLUMN

R rugosum [photo page 9]

Section VII Euvireya-Subsection v; Euvireya [according to classification proposed by Dr. George Argent *rhododendrons of Subgenus Vireya* RHS 2006]. *R rugosum*, like *R robinsonii* covered in the last issue of *Newsletter*, is from the largest Vireya subsection with 89 species covering most of the Vireya range including Australia.

Name

The species takes its name from its wrinkled leaves. The Latin *ruga* a wrinkle or fold.

Description [taken, though not completely from *The Rhododendrons of Sabah Malaysian Borneo* **George Argent, Anthony Lamb and Anthea Phillipps** Natural History Publications, Borneo 2007]; shrub or small tree to about 8m occurring in mossy, to rather dry, open forest over a broad altitudinal range from 2000-3500m in upper montane and subalpine forest, often on ridge tops on Mt Kinabalu, Mt Trus Madi and Mt Alab in Sabah and on Mt Murud in Sarawak. There are two forms, var. *rugosum* with the rugose leaves seen in Australian collections and var. *kinabluense*, found on the Marai Parai Spur of Mt Kinabluense, with smooth non rugose leaves and larger pink flowers. The latter form has, so far as I know, yet to find its way to Australian collections. I address var. *rugosum*.

Leaves usually 4-7 together in well marked pseudowhorls; ovate or broadly elliptic and often rather convex, broadly pointed or shortly acuminate, the margin entire and slightly reflexed; the base broadly tapering to rounded; 60-100 x 30-35 mm the mid-vein and lateral veins, also, impressed above, extremely prominent beneath; rugose, tough and leathery, dark green above and slightly paler beneath. **Petiole** dark purplish red, 8-24 x 4 mm, densely scaly young, strongly grooved above and often laterally wrinkled.

Flower umbels are 8-14 flowered, with the flowers hanging, or half hanging, pink or purplish pink and unscented. Corolla tubular campanulate 25-30 x 25 mm.

Similar Species. Argent *et al* say *R rugosum* is most closely related to *R polyanthemum*. They say its resemblance to *R acuminatum* is superficial. Their flowers are quite different. Thus far I have only observed *R acuminatum* in flower in RBGE. I have to wait for my relatively small plants to flower.

Hybrids. There are many natural hybrids. Argent *et al* describe *xliewianum*, *x coriifolium* and *xkeditii* [pp 244-248] being respectively with *R stenophyllum*, *R buxifolium* and *crassifolium*, and with *R maxwellii*, *R durionifolium*, *R abeitifolium* and *R fallacinum* [p 222].

Propagation. *R rugosum* has been in cultivation at Olinda for a long time, It is easily propagated and grows quite readily, if slowly.

Verdict. Andrew Rouse benched a truss at the June General Meeting. He said his plant was covered in flowers. I was not the judge or I would have placed it higher. I think that when the numerous plants that members have commence to flower *R rugosum* will be much sought after.

Simon Begg

DANDENONG RANGES GARDENS MANAGEMENT PLAN

A TEN YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE DANDENONG RANGES GARDENS

Parks Victoria is commencing a process to define the future of eight garden properties in Dandenong Ranges through the development of a ten year strategic plan to be known as the Dandenong Ranges Gardens Management Plan. This Plan will provide a guide for the future use, development, landscaping and management of the eight garden properties.

Currently, management is guided by the 1998 Dandenong Ranges Gardens Future Directions Plan. Many objectives in this Plan were achieved; however, Parks Victoria wants to ensure that the vision and objectives for future management are appropriate and continue to guide management.

The past decade has seen new challenges for gardens management such as the impact of changing climate and tourism and visitor opportunities. We need to explore and recommend how the gardens will respond to new challenges, and to ensure that the gardens are managed appropriately for the community, stakeholders and agencies for now and into the future.

KEY STEPS IN PLANNING

Consultation with the community, stakeholders and agencies prior to preparing the Draft Management Plan. This includes distribution of this paper to explore ideas on issues, needs and opportunities.



Draft Management Plan developed.



Consultation with the community, stakeholders and agencies about the Draft Management Plan.

60 day opportunity for further input by community, stakeholders and agencies.



Final Management Plan –
this document will guide the management of the Dandenong Ranges Gardens for the next 10 years.

THE GARDEN PROPERTIES

William Ricketts Sanctuary: 92 William Ricketts ceramic sculptures of people and animals, set in natural surrounds of ferns and Australian Mountain Ash (Mt Dandenong, Melway Ref: 66 G1)

Mt Dandenong Arboretum: rare mature conifers and exotic trees collection, great views of the Warburton Ranges, picnics (Mt Dandenong, Melway Ref: 52 G12)

National Rhododendron Gardens: world-renowned botanic garden, colourful Spring flowering, lakes, great views and walks, giftshop (Olinda, Melway Ref: 66 K6)

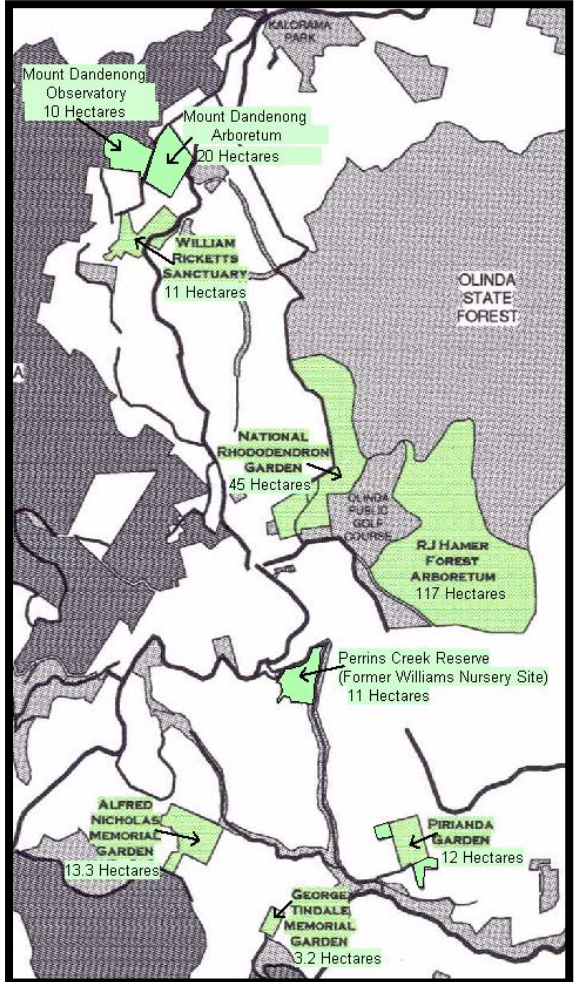
R.J. Hamer Arboretum: spectacular views of surrounding blue ranges, walks through extensive collections of trees, picnic and play (Olinda, Melway Ref: 122 B9)

Pirianda Gardens: rare and exotic plants, spectacular autumn foliage, fascinating walks through terraced gardens and fern gullies (Olinda, Melway Ref: 122 A12)

The Secret Garden (Perrins Creek Reserve): former nursery site hidden alongside Perrins Creek, remnant rockwalls and staircases, specimen trees (Olinda, Melway Ref: 66 J10)

Alfred Nicholas Gardens: timeless Burnham Beeches hilltop garden, ornamental lake and boathouse, waterfalls, autumn reflections (Sherbrooke, Melway Ref: 75 G1)

George Tindale Gardens: all-season hilltop garden inspiring garden buffs and visitors, towering Australian Mountain Ash backdrop (Sherbrooke, Melway Ref: 75 J2)



CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?

The two month community 'Have your Say' opportunity finished at the end of June 2008. Parks Victoria appreciates the submissions by groups and individuals to help us understand their interests and concern before the draft Management Plan is prepared.

Over the next six months or so the draft Management Plan will be prepared. The draft will be placed on public exhibition for a 60 day period in 2009.

If you would like to be notified of when then draft Management Plan is on public exhibition please provide us with your contact details on gardensplanning@parks.vic.gov.au or contact Parks Victoria on 131963.

Kristen Jackson

Managing Curator , Dandenong Ranges Gardens

LOGAN BOTANIC GARDEN

Logan Botanic Garden is one of the four national Botanic Gardens of Scotland together comprising the 'Botanics'. The others are the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, established in 1670, Benmore Botanic Garden, Argyll, west of Glasgow and Dawyck Botanic Garden in the Scottish Borders south of Edinburgh. RBGE acquired the other three during the 20th century.

Each of the Botanics differ in topography, soils and climate enabling an exceptionally wide range of plants to be grown. Indeed together they constitute one of the richest plant collections in the world, more than 15,000 species or almost 7% of known plant species.

Logan is situated on a narrow peninsular, the Rhins of Galloway, jutting into Solway Firth on the south western Scottish border. There it is warmed by the gulf stream. In consequence many plant species, frost tender elsewhere in Scotland, and, indeed, in most of the United Kingdom, can be grown. Logan boasts a Tasmanian creek planting, including, I observed, *dicksonia antarctica* [soft tree fern] and *nothofagus cunninghamii* [myrtle beech]. I expected, but could not find, *nothofagus gunnii* [Australia's only deciduous Gondwana beech]. I did discover *nothofagus moorei* [an Australian Gondwana beech from Northern New South Wales and Southern Queensland].

As elsewhere in Western Scotland visitors were asked to walk through a footbath to try to slow the spread of the 2 dreaded *phythophora*, *ramorum* and *kernoviae*.

As befits Scotland's most exotic garden Logan boasts a significant collection of less hardy rhododendrons. The Maddenia Subsection of Rhododendron Section featured prominently, though when I reviewed my photographs, there were far fewer from this subsection than I thought there would be. I note below those species in flower that I photographed successfully and whose labels I could find and, later, identify with the photo. I missed many species I should have captured. What I did capture, from Logan, are:

R burmanicum, *S Rhododendron*, *Ssec Maddenia*

R ambiguum, *S Rhododendron*, *Ssec Triflora*

R siderophyllum, *S Rhododendron*, *Ssec Triflora*

R edgeworthii, *S Rhododendron*, *Ssec Edgeworthia* [Logan had a rare pink form that, had there been a competitive show, would have featured prominently]

R falconeri, *S Ponticum* *Ssec Falconera*

R genestierianum, *S Rhododendron*, *Ssec Genestieria*

R arboretum var. *cinnamomeum* var. *roseum*, *S Ponticum*, *Ssec Arborea*

R yunnanense, *S Rhododendron*, *Ssec Triflora*

R scopulorum, *S Rhododendron*, *Ssec Maddenia*

I have added photos of these species to the Society Picasaweb site under the Asiatic Species Head. There are also photos of Logan on the site.

There are indeed many interesting and, to me, rare plants at Logan. It was worth a visit for them alone. I noted:

Trachycarpus wagnerians [a rare palm]

Myosotidium hortensia [Chatham Island Forget-me-not. Actually I do know this as it is growing in our garden at Olinda]

Arisaema [sorry I missed the rest, but rare and black, it is]

Correa manni

Gunnera [a whole 'swamp' of these]

Nothofagus nervosa [Our garden has most species of nothofagus but this one is a new one to me- I shall have to ask Ken Gillanders, who visited Logan a few days earlier than Marcia and me]

Logan is well landscaped and maintained. Originally it was part of Logan House, next door, which Marcia and I also visited on the Scottish Rhododendron Society pre conference tour.

Simon Begg

AQIS. AGAIN

Our Society is a member of The Ornamental Plant Conservation association of Australia Inc (OPCAA). Marcia and I are individual members. OPCAA publishes a quarterly magazine GENUS. Val Marshall, our librarian, brings the Society copies along to committee meetings as she receives them. They are available for our members to read. I wonder how many do?

OPCCA encourages communication about ornamental plants, and their conservation, through the establishment of registered reference conservation collections.

The May 2008 issue of GENUS observes in its editorial:

“With the current emphasis on the introduction of pests, diseases, internationally recognized invasive plants, plants with a potential for environmental weed risk and the global trade in endangered species, it has become a difficult area for interested parties to engage in the import of rare and unusual plant material.”

After referring to its recently negotiated protocol with Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne to assist the exchange of plant material between RBGM and registered OPCCA collection holders, the editorial continues:

“For members and collection holders with an interest in importing stock from overseas, an informative talk and discussion was held in February between Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) and collection holders”

The May 2008 issue of GENUS has two lengthy articles contributed by AQIS for those, like ourselves, who missed the February discussions. The first is an overview of plant quarantine. This article addresses, prominently, the need for Quarantine by warning ‘What has happened to others’. The warning mentions the \$7.5 billion + cost of Foot & Mouth disease to UK farmers and the associated \$5 billion + cost to UK tourism. The warning concludes with AQIS finds of plant cuttings in a bible. The article does mention seed import but, interestingly, with no mention made of small quantities permitted in accompanied and unaccompanied baggage until the postscript, which, in part, reads:

“During the evening, concerns were raised regarding the clearance of seed through an international airport. Under the ‘Contact AQIS’ there are links to the ‘Airports’ or ‘Compliments and Complaints’. These concerns can be addressed to either of these”

Not exactly volunteering the actual position as *Newsletter* published in March and again in May/June. The article does provide a useful overview, including the respective roles of Biosecurity Australia (BA) and AQIS.

BA *“advises AQIS of pest and disease risks”*.

AQIS *“implements appropriate risk mitigation procedures.*

Amends legislation or instruction as appropriate.

Updates profiles, and ICON (AQIS import conditions database,) and

Provides training of staff where applicable.”

The article also describes import of plant material other than seed, or seed for which a permit is required, as if the procedures were routine and any one could implement them. Sadly, save for experienced professionals, not really true.

The second AQIS article has two parts, each a page. One is headed “AQIS IMPORTATION CHECKLIST FOR LIVE PLANTS” and the other “BIOSECURITY AUSTRALIA IMPORT RISK ANALYSIS FLOWCHART ARA HANDBOOK 2007”

Each of these is informative but hardly a ‘do it yourself kit’ for an amateur enthusiast seeking to add new discoveries to a plant collection.

Owen Harrod, Senior Policy Officer (Plant Science) Nursery Stock & Weed Assessment Team Plant Bio-Security, Canberra addressed OPCCA members with Stephen Ryan MC on June 11. Unfortunately Marcia and I missed this also. In future we shall have to be more attentive.

The Society and Parks should consider registering the NRG rhododendron collection with OPCCA. Registering collections might also be interesting for Society members. If ever ARSV or its members wish to brave the AQIS permit application process and the risk analysis needed to obtain them advice and assistance from OPCCA might make all the difference.

Simon Begg



R rugosum Andrew Rouse



R haematodes
Benmore Botanic Garden
April 2008



Sequoia gigantea Avenue
Benmore Botanic Garden
April 2008



R fulvens,
Benmore Botanic Garden
April 2008



R edgeworthii
Logan Botanic Garden
May 2008



[Above]
Rarboreum var. cinnamomeum
Logan Botanic Garden
May 2008

[Right]
R tuba
Front Lawn, Beechmont, July 2008
Tree remover at work behind



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE GARDENS?

The new financial year has started and we are starting to get some projects up and running and continuing with unfinished projects.

In the last couple of months staff and volunteers have been busy with pruning and mulching. The creek above the lake has been cleaned up and more work is scheduled to remove ferns and prune remaining plants.

The Mooreland area and below Serenity point has seen big changes as we have cleaned up the area with a bulldozer. It will take a couple of years to finish tidying up and start to rejuvenate the Mooreland area. We are hoping to extend the conifer collection and lawn areas. Hopefully, after weeds are controlled, there will be some opportunity to extend the beds below Serenity point.

We continue to slowly work on the sensory garden. When the weather fines up we are hoping to get on with making the rock retaining wall and start planting it up.

Visitation for last financial year was 25,000 which was an improvement of 2,000 on the previous year. Thanks to all who have worked hard to promote the gardens, put on events and present the gardens to the public.

Preparation for spring is starting. We look forward to the Hanami Cherry blossom festival on September 21st, where we host the Australia Japanese society which puts on a picnic under the cherries with a tea ceremony in the tea house. The Daffodil show will be running for the month of September before the ARS put on its show. The garden explorer will be running for the spring season and we are in the process of organising drivers and buses.

I continue to work on water infrastructure for the gardens. I am going through a process with Sothern Rural Water to add a bore to the property. In conjunction with this I am applying for capital grants for all Parks Victoria Dandenong Ranges properties to replace their irrigation systems so that we can maximise water saving technology and use modern equipment to put water where we need it. This process may take a few years before the money becomes available but at least the job will be in the system.

The interpretations project is progressing. I am writing up information for the areas we plan to put signs in. I hope to put some signs out in the garden before spring. The ARS will be integral in helping put this information together, checking and editing to make sure the information is accurate before it goes to print.

I am excited about the projects that we have on and believe that we are adding real value to the property and hope that people will feel that they have truly visited a special place.

Glenn Maskell
Team Leader, Parks Victoria

JOTTINGS

EXERCISE FOR PEOPLE OVER 50

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side. With a 5-lb potato sack in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax. Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato sacks. Then try 50-lb potato sacks and then eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato sack in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. (I'm at this level).

After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each of the sacks.

'BOTANIC NEWS' the magazine put out by Friends of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens has an excellent photo on the front cover taken by one of our ARS members, Michael Hare. The photo is of a *Lepidozamia peroffskyana*, a native of Queensland, growing at the Botanic Gardens. It shows a perfect example of a huge male cone. Mike is a member of the 'Friends Group'.

WANTED: Historical photos of the National Rhododendron Gardens and the Australian Rhododendron Society. To celebrate our 50th anniversary in 2010 we are planning to launch a small book of the history of both the Gardens and the Society. Anecdotes would also be welcome. Please send to the Editor or Carole Quinn at the address on the front page of the newsletter.

TALENTED BIRDS: We all know how talented our indigenous lyrebirds are in the way they can mimic so many sounds they have heard. At the Healesville Sanctuary one of the lyrebirds is very accomplished at mimicking all the local birds, chain saws, nail guns, sirens and the sound of screeching tyres made by 'hoons' as they race around the roundabout outside the sanctuary on a Saturday night. There are plenty of lyrebirds at the Rhododendron Gardens also. At times up to five lyrebirds have been seen scratching around in the mulch. For this reason dead tree fern fronds are added to prevent the newly planted vireyas from being dug up. In a recent English magazine residents of a village were complaining about the constant wail of sirens. Imagine their surprise when it was discovered that a blackbird was the perpetrator. Sitting on the highest power pole he was delivering his fine repertory for hours at a time!

GARDEN GURUS: On a visit to Tesselaars last week I found a magazine 'The Garden Guru' for sale. Never having seen the programme on Channel 9 but knowing they had visited Tesselaars Garden and Rare Plant Festival in February this year, where the Society had a stand selling vireyas, I took one home to read. It is a quarterly production with some excellent articles on gardens and travel. This winter edition has a large article about Tesselaars Festival including an informative section about Andrew Raper (Rhodoglen Nursery) and vireyas. Andrew was invited by the Society to sell his vireyas on its stand. They sold extremely well and created a lot of interest. Andrew lists his top five vireyas – 'Coral Flare', 'Highland White Jade', 'Thai Prince', 'Diixie' (his latest release) and 'Simbu Sunset'. Maybe the nurseries will be rushed when the public reads the article!!

FOR SALE: ‘*Rhododendrons of the Subgenus Vireya*’, George Argent’s latest and very informative book. Val Marshall our librarian has five for sale at \$105 each. Contact her on PH: 9803 4434.

Sage Heat and Mist Propagator , 6ftx3ft for sale for \$550. In as new condition, used only briefly. For more information ring Carole Quinn PH: 5968 1027.

Marcia Begg

VIREYA GROUP

The Vireya Group met on a bleak winter’s Saturday morning at NRG, Olinda on 12 July. The fire in the lunchroom was blazing but Marcia brought a heater as well, to warm the other end of the room. In the conditions numbers were reduced to half a dozen, so we all fitted around the fire.

After a warming cup, and a bite to eat, we braved the cold to inspect the Vireya species bed below Serenity Point. The vireyas there were also surviving the cold bravely. I think they like that better than summer and autumn heat and dry.

There were two or three smallish plants of *R tuba* flower. The other flowers I noticed were, I think, hybrids. One, I remember well, was supplied to members, including me, a number of years ago as unusual *R macgregoriae*. Orange- yellow flowers like a smaller R ‘Simbu Sunset’. Jack Morris won a prize with one at a show. I have a stem, in a vase, as I write. Argent *Rhododendrons in subgenus Vireya* RHS 2006, 306 describes natural hybrids with *R zoelleri* as being common as regrowth in disturbed areas. Another with quite vivid purplish red flowers looks like *R buxifolium* but the flowers are clearly different from the species fully described, with photos, in Argent, Lamb and Phillipps *The Rhododendrons of Sabah, Malaysian Borneo* Natural History Publications (Borneo) 2007, 120.

We did notice Parks Victoria work in progress at Serenity Point. Clearing to make the view accessible again. I agree with Alan Walker’s assessment at the last General Meeting that the work will be a great improvement. There is still much scope for Glenn Maskell’s signage project in this area to inform visitors of the valuable vireya species collection ‘in progress’ here. The Society needs plant labelling assuming, of course, that light fingered [or should it be small spaded] visitors won’t remove the plants. Remarkably few visitors, members included, know where the collection is or much about it. Also, I think, such a valuable resource needs a few more basic essentials for survival. An automated watering system would be my first. A battery operated gate valve is easily installed but a supply of water, so far from the entrance, is a much bigger challenge. Most of the species are very small plants. Even the bigger ones have recently been moved there. I would not subject my similar sized plants to the discipline of a once weekly watering in a heatwave.

We also commented that, for the first time in years, the Gardens as a whole were going forward not backwards. Really good work Glenn and the volunteers.

Finally, as small a group as we were, we decided we would like to encourage Ferny Creek to hold a January Vireya- Liliium Show. We hoped our Society would agree to co badge the event. Committee, at its July meeting, agreed to do so.

Simon Begg

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Simon,

I came across the following in William T. Stearn. Botanical Latin (Timber Press) regarding the name Carolus Linnaeus, which is usually seen as the Latinised form of Carl von Linné.

However:

"The name Linnaeus, contrary to frequent supposition, is not a Latinized version of Linné, but Linné is a shortened version of Linnaeus, just as Nobel is of Nobelius, Artedi of Arctaedius. Before the eighteenth century many Swedish peasants did not possess family surnames; each added to the baptismal name the genitive of the father's name with the suffix –son (son) or –dotter (daughter) according to sex. Thus Linnaeus's father was Nils Ingemarsson (1674-1733), the son of Ingemar Bengtsson and Ingrid Ingemarsdotter, and grandson of Bengt Ingemarsson and Ingrid Andersdotter. The family possessed a property in Småland called Linnegård after a big and aged linden tree (Tilia), linn being a now obsolete Swedish variant of lind. On registering at a university, students had to provide themselves with surnames. Ingrid Ingemarsdotter's two brothers Carl and Sven took the name Tiliander from this tree. Her son Nils Ingemarsson coined for himself the name Linnaeus referring to the same family linden, and her grandson Carl Linnaeus made it famous. In his Flora Suecica, 157 (1745) he refers to Tilia as being 'vastissima in pago Stegaryd Sunnerboae Smolandiae, unde Tilandri et Linnaei dicti'. The name Linnaeus was thus of Latin form from the start, like many other Swedish family names ending in –us"

From **John Godfrey**

[Thank you John: Ed]

Dear Simon,

I received the copy of the Rhododendron newsletter, and it made interesting reading. Thank-you for sending it.

I didn't know about your article, pure coincidence that I should have rung now. I want to write about the two Australian rhododendrons in the Voluntary Guides newsletter (Botanic Gardens' Guides) as I think that some Guides probably don't know much about them. I always mentioned Lady Loch on guided walks when we got to the huge, late lamented, "Lady Loch" oak; Camellia jap. 'Lady Loch' was right beside it, and the vireya not far away.

I'll go and have another look at the Herbarium specimens, and also try to get those copies of your newsletter.

Thanks very much for your help,

Sincerely,

Jenny Happell. (Guide at the Melbourne Botanic Gardens)

[This letter needs a little explanation. Jenny rang me to tell me that she was with Bob Withers at the Herbarium when he came to the conclusion that there were two Australian native Vireyas, not one as was previously believed to be the case. The article in the May/June Newsletter did not prompt the call; it was pure coincidence. I think Jenny said the specimens included both straight and curved corollas, but my recollection of what she said may be wrong. I would like to try to muster the energy to go and look myself. No promises. I suggested Jenny might join the Society but she is a member of the Camellia Society. Ed]

Dear Simon

Interesting article of yours on *R lochiae* and *R viriosum* in the May-June 2008 newsletter. The name switching though (no fault of your's) is thoroughly confusing. What distinguishes a species is another area prone to confusion. This has been witnessed by controversies with orchid species such as the Australian rock orchid, *D speciosum*, which David Jones has split into numerous species whilst Peter Adams of University of Melbourne Botany School, in a detailed study similar to Mary Gandini's, has in my view convincingly refuted. In taxonomy there has and always will be splitters and clumpers but it is worth noting that there is nothing absolute about a species classification. It has been imposed from without by us. This sometimes has unforeseen consequences for rare/endangered species. A certain grevillea on Kangaroo Island was integrated, taxonomically, into an eastern grevillea and the Kangaroo Island material, in one stroke of the pen, was no longer "endangered", viz. it exists elsewhere!.

Mary Gandini's work appears to be suggesting that there is a local vireya "complex" something which Banksia growers will be familiar with by way of the *B collina-spinulosa* complex. Her preliminary conclusions are not dissimilar to Peter Adam's above.

Speciation, apart from long periods of separation, is thought to result from stress episodes (that evolution can go in jumps) and where mutations may find a niche (classically rift valleys for Australian native plants) in the new prevailing conditions as opposed to their more normal demise. The observed variation in the corolla suggests that there may have been significant differences in the pollinators between mountains - a fascinating question in itself.

Yours sincerely

Peter Fisher

[Thank you, too, Peter: Ed]

RHODODENDRONS (OTHER THAN VIREYAS) NOT ON AQIS PERMITTED LIST FOR IMPORT OF SEED (WITHOUT A PERMIT) THAT ARE KNOWN ALREADY TO BE IN AUSTRALIA

Back in March I promised to list Asiatic Rhododendron species held at NRG (or known to be held by ARSV or elsewhere) but not listed on AQIS permitted list for Rhododendron seed import. Alan Kepert and I have compiled a list of 7 non Vireya species on the NRG rhododendron species database and a further 18 in ARSV shade house or in members' hands that do not appear on the AQIS permitted list as at 6 March 2008 (I doubt the permitted list has been altered).

They are, with date of NRG accession on planting or, without date, location in ARSV shade house or members' properties in course of growing on and ultimate planting at NRG (as applicable) shown:

| | |
|--------------------------|------|
| <i>R adenosum</i> | 2007 |
| <i>R balfourianum</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R bhutanense</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R bureavioides</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R chamaethomsonii</i> | 1995 |

| | |
|---|------|
| <i>R chunienii</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R citriniflorum</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R coriaceum</i> | 1977 |
| <i>R denudatum</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R gingongshanicum</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R glanduliferum</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R hunnewellianum</i> Subsp <i>rockii</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R hylaeum</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R martinianum</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R montigianum</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R nagasakianum</i> | 1970 |
| <i>R primuliflorum</i> | 1988 |
| <i>R rivulare</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R serotinum</i> | 1980 |
| <i>R sikangense</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R spilotum</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R stewartianum</i> | 2007 |
| <i>R tsai aff</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R 4456</i> | ARSV |
| <i>R vialii</i> | ARSV |

This list does not exclude any future species discovered to be in Australia.

Simon Begg

BENCH DISPLAY

20 June 2008

Our display had some very good blooms again presented by the usual exhibitors. I am not going to list displayers, only winning blooms. The following were picked by the judges.

Vireyas-inundatum, *radians*, *tuba*, *stenophyllum*, *lorchris*, *javanicum x*, *rarelepidotum*, *orbiculatum*, *javanicum*, 'Jazz Band', 'Coral Seas', *konori x lochiaie* and 'Arthurs Choice'.

The names of other notable blooms were collected before I remembered to get them.-

Interestingly if we had chosen other judges they undoubtedly would have chosen different blooms. There was a large entry of Indica Azaleas. We are having difficulty in naming many of them but there were some very good flowers, 'Lorraine' and 'Anna Kher' to mention two.

.Even though it is a little early for Asiatics there were a few on show. As we had a very full agenda no exhibit of the night was chosen. We had a good Non Rhodo display--to name a few- a striking bowl of Daphnes, an unusual Dahlia, a bowl of Banksia and a bowl of Hellebores.

Len Sloggett

BENMORE BOTANIC GARDEN

Benmore Botanic Garden is situated in a magnificent mountainside setting on the Eachaig River, Argyll, near Dunoon west of Glasgow. It is one of the four Scottish Botanic Gardens of which Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh is the original [see my note on Logan Botanic Garden at pages 7-8 above].

Marcia and I visited Benmore at the end of April 2008. At the time we were staying at Inveraray on Loch Firth further west. The weather would pass for a cool winter day at Olinda-bracing! We needed a hot drink at the restaurant to warm us up before venturing forth.

The central feature of the Gardens is an avenue of Giant Redwoods, *sequoiadendron giganteum* [syn. *Wellingtonia gigantean*], planted in 1863, and now all in excess of 50m tall. To enter the gardens, proper, visitors cross the Eachaig River and walk through the Redwood avenue. At least until recently they did. Now visitors detour through a footpath to try to slow *phythophora ramorum* and *phythophora kernoviae* from invading. These dreaded fungi have been found less than an hour's drive away but Benmore is, so far, free. The Redwoods are now roped off and visitors must view them from afar.

Benmore is noted for its tall trees including the Redwoods. The tallest, at 190 feet, is a *Pseudotsuga menziesii*.

The Gardens have a substantial climb from the river to the top in the western corner. There the Chilean Rainforest glade is to be found. Unfortunately I could not find any Nothofagus species there that I did not have in my own collection. But there were good specimens of *N dombeyi* and *N obliqua*.

Benmore had a 'Hard Rain' exhibition showing, in a number of graphic pictures the havoc man's pollution has wreaked on this planet. We also enjoyed the herbarium.

Then there was the botanic collection. Magnificent. I photographed a number of rhododendron species in flower and added these pictures to the ARSV Picasaweb site. They are:

R arboreum Sec Ponticum Subsec Arborea

R rubiginosum var. *rubiginosum* Sec Rhododendron Subsec. *Helirolepida*

R fulgens Sec Ponticum Subsec. *Fulgensia*

R fulvum Sec Ponticum Subsec *Fulva*

R wadanum Sec *Brachycalyx*

R brachyanthum subsp *hypolepidotum* Sec Rhododendron Subsec *Glauca*

R glaucophyllum Sec Rhododendron Sub sec *Glauca*

R luteiflorum Sec Rhododendron Subsec *Glauca*

R oreodoxa Sec Ponticum Subsec *Fortunea*

R vernicosum Sec Ponticum Subsec *Fortunea*

R amesiae Sec Rhododendron Subsec *Triflora*

R eudoxum Sec Ponticum Subsec *Neriiflora*

R haematodes subsp *haematodes* Sec Ponticum Subsec *Neriiflora*

R neriiflorum subsp *phaedropum* Sec Ponticum Subsec *Neriiflora*

R cinnabarinum Sec Rhododendron Subsec *Cinnabarina*

R hodgsonii Sec Ponticum Subsec *Falconera*

R scabrifolium var *spiciferum* Sec Rhododendron Subsec *Scabrifolia*

R semnoides Sec Ponticum Subsec *Falconera*

Simon Begg

ANTICIPATED PROGRAMME FOR 2008

AUGUST:

SATURDAY 2ND 10.00AM-3.00PM Pakenham Garden Club Garden Expo

At Pakenham Racecourse (Racecourse Rd Pakenham)

FRIDAY 15TH General Meeting – Ian Wallace, Big Leaf Rhododendrons.

SEPTEMBER:

SATURDAY 6TH, Vireya Group at Mike and Inge Hammer's house 2 The Crescent, Sassafras. Ring Simon Begg to confirm. 9751 1610

SUNDAY 14TH 10-5.00PM VIREYA SALE & DISPLAY DAY, Olinda Hall, Cnr Olinda-Monbulk Rd & The Georgian Rd

FRIDAY 19TH 8.00pm General Meeting at Nunawading.. Speaker: Graham Price on hybridising/pollinating Vireyas

OCTOBER:

FRIDAY 3RD , SAT 4TH AND SUN 5TH ABC GARDEN SHOW @ CAULFIELD RACECOURSE

SATURDAY 4TH & SUNDAY 5TH AZALEA SHOW in Hall

FRIDAY 17TH 8.00pm General Meeting and National Council AGM at Nunawading. Speaker: Graham Smith recently retired director of Pukeiti Garden in New Zealand.

NOVEMBER:

FROM SAT.1ST TO TUES. 4TH, RHODODENDRON SHOW in Hall.

SATURDAY 8TH – Vireya Group Ring Simon Begg to confirm. 9751 1610

FRIDAY 21ST 8.00 pm AGM at Nunawading. Speaker to be advised.

DECEMBER:

CHRISTMAS FUNCTION – SUNDAY 7TH 12.00PM at Mike and Inge Hammer's house, 2 The Crescent, Sassafras

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Australian Rhododendron Society Vic Branch Committee 2007-8

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| President –Carole Quinn Ph 5968 1027 | Inge Hammer-Ph: 9755 2176 |
| Vice President No- 1 Mike Hammer Ph: 9755 2176 | |
| Vice President No- 2 Bill Taylor Ph: 9754 8275 | Marcia Begg, Ph: 9751 1610 |
| Treasurer – Neil Webster, Ph: 9859 3622 | Elizabeth Xipell-Ph: 0959 9934 |
| Secretary – Val Marshall, Ph: 9803 4434 | John Quinn – Ph: 5968 1027 |
| Simon Begg – 9751 1610 (Newsletter Editor) | Alan Walker-Ph: 9726 8836 |
| Len Sloggett – Ph: 9808 6484 | Mike Hare- Ph: 9844 2232 |

SOCIETY PICASAWEB SITE

Visit <http://picasaweb.google.com/ARSVic> for the latest pictures.

Additions since the May 2008 Newsletter are :

- Logan Botanic Garden
- Benmore Botanic Garden
- More Asiatic species arranged alphabetically
- Extra Vireya Hybrids

For the latest on the “Beechmont” Picasaweb site visit

<http://picasaweb.google.com/simonwbegg>

SWB