



Rhododendrons South Australia

Australian Rhododendron Society Inc. South Australian Branch

Issue 98-June 2016



Last Month's Meeting

Our guest speaker at the May meeting was Cameron Peebles from MLBG, who entertained us with an interesting description of his excursion to China. The presentation covered the first part of his trip and included some picturesque slides depicting wild grown rhododendrons, many of which were Rhododendron

Delaveyi. Members will be treated to the second part of his talk at the July meeting. The plant raffle of Rhododendron Furnivall's Daughter was won by Sue Beckoff.

Agenda items discussed at the meeting involved;

- (a) Closure of Boulters nursery in Victoria
- (b) Report from National council
- (c) Update on Neutrog orders

Thanks go to our Vice President, Belinda Cullum for chairing the meeting in the absence of Robert Hatcher.



Sue Beckoff

Next Meeting

This will be held at the Crafers Hall on Wednesday, June 15th at 8pm and our guest speaker will be Rob Hatcher from MLBG. He will speak about the centenary celebrations of the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia group of the RHS and associated garden visits. He will also touch on visits to other gardens in Cornwall, Devon and the border between England and Wales. Rob's presentation will include images of these places.



Please remember to bring a plate for supper and something for the "pot Luck Stall". Friends and new members are always welcome.



White-winged Fairy-Wren

Malurus leucopterus

This Fairy-Wren is mostly seen in outback Australia, but there are colonies closer to Adelaide than Stirling. Near Gepps Cross where Salisbury Highway and Port Wakefield Road meet, this bird can be quite common. A small bird watching group a week ago saw 10.

The family group often seen in lignum bushes and saltbush and swamps with the male sitting high, so the bright blue bird can be easily seen. When observed, the male dives low into the bush to hide, and his family lead the predator 100 metres or so away to protect the male.

A beautiful small bird and surprisingly so close to Adelaide city.

Bloom of the Month – *Vireya Brilliantine*



From the Propagation Bench *by Richard Illman*

In winter, many deciduous plants can be propagated by hardwood cuttings. These include Hydrangea, Roses, Flowering currant, Viburnum, Deutzia, Forsythia, Philadelphus, and Weigela. Take cuttings 100-150mm long and insert almost completely in cutting mix or directly in the ground. Growth should commence in the late spring and the rooted cuttings should be left where they are until the next winter and then dug and planted out.

It is also an ideal time to look through the garden for self-sown seedlings of Japanese maples which can be dug and potted for use as root stock for grafting more ornamental Maple varieties on them. Anyone wishing to try some grafting and requiring some help can contact Richard either at the meeting or via e-mail.



Liliums are ideal companion plants for rhododendrons and at this time of year bulb suppliers are issuing their new season catalogues. If you already have Liliums and wish to expand your collection you can lift some of your bulbs and remove a couple of scales. These can be placed in a small zipper bag of just damp peatmoss and left undisturbed. In three or four months there should be several identical bulblets developing on the broken edge. These can be snapped

off and planted in a pot ready to be transferred to the garden next year.

Don't forget that your established Liliium plants need to be mulched with composted animal manure to ensure a wonderful display next summer.

The Month Ahead *by Bill Voigt*



In the last notes I wrote “herbs” instead of “Hebes” when referring to plants that should be cut back or pruned. Hebes were once known as Veronicas, which are mostly low growing biennials and perennials. The more prostrate varieties such as *Veronica pectinata* are excellent ground covering plants. Almost all Veronicas have blue flowers, although there are some pink forms. Hebes are evergreen shrubs, grown for their dense spires of flower which can be blue, white, pink or red. Their foliage can be almost black, variegated, golden or green. If not trimmed regularly they become woody and rather unsightly with dead wood and leafless stems. They are very suitable for low hedges, containers and rockeries. Most varieties are suitable for coastal gardens.

Ericas are best planted when quite small and at this time of the year many can be purchased in tubes. They provide winter colour and in future years will attract our native honeyeaters.



Dahlia India

Dahlias have finished flowering and the old foliage can be removed, but don't be in a hurry to lift the tubers. July will be early enough. Penstemons are almost at the end of their blooming time, so when the last flowers have finished they can be cut back to just an inch above ground level. Later when they send up new shoots they can be successfully divided.

The various forms of *Daphne odorata* will be coming into bloom very soon. There are pink and white varieties, some with variegated foliage, and all with that well know perfume. *Daphne genkwa* is a deciduous shrub with lilac blue flowers which have only a faint scent but it is a real collector's item.

A very attractive Western Australian shrub, well suited to growing in a large container, is *Diplolaena grandiflora*. It has drooping flower heads resembling Proteas, likes full sun and an acid soil and may be available at Raywood nursery at Deep creek.

Now that the wet weather has arrived it is important to check for any places in the garden where drainage is poor and water logging can occur. Rhododendrons and azaleas are very prone to root rot so building up low sites and/or digging in a few furrows or trenches may be beneficial.

Lace bug can still be about due to the warmer than usual season, but spraying with a systemic insecticide should keep your plants free of this dreaded pest.



The rhododendron “Max Sye” continues to flower out of season, so if you have this rhododendron, don’t be alarmed if it is flowering now- that seems to be the nature of the beast.

With the soil well moistened now, low branches of azaleas and Rhodos can be layered. Use a peg, wire or even a rock to hold the branch down and in six months roots should be forming.

The garden may not need watering now, but don’t neglect any containers that are under eaves or verandahs.

Rhododendron “Max Sye”

Reliable Flowering House Plants

There are surprisingly few house plants that are easy to grow, have year-round presence and can be relied upon to flower every year. Here are several that should perform well without needing glasshouse levels of light, humidity and warmth.



Brunfelsia pauciflora “Macrantha”



Clivia Miniata

June in the Garden



Galanthus caucasicus



Rhododendron "Winter Beauty"



Camellia "Mark Allen"



Leculia gratissima

This is an exciting time of the year with new bulbs arriving in the mail and last year's bulbs beginning to emerge from their dormancy. The Galanthus have started to flower, albeit a little early, and cyclamen are still putting on a show. There is autumn colour holding on many of the later maples and our Ginkos have not yet reached their peak. The Japonica camellias are contributing to a good range of colour in the garden.

Tales from Forest Lodge *by Milton Bowman*

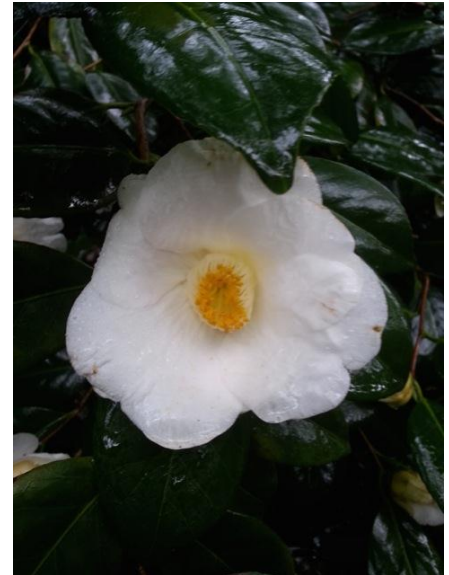


May has been a wonderful month, the season appears to have broken and it is getting cold as it should at this time of the year. We had 224.5mm of rain, and the heaviest 24 hour total was 65mm. Most of the water has soaked into the soil and there has been little runoff from the property,

and the water tanks are $\frac{1}{2}$ full.

(When I think about the situation on the East coast over the last few days where places have received 400mm plus in 24 hours I am very glad that we live in the Adelaide Hills).

This rain has brightened up the trees and other plants and the place is looking fresh and lush. The early camellias have started to flower and the others are budding up nicely. Some of the seedling camellias that were planted out 7 or so years ago are flowering for the first time and whilst the hope is that they will be magnificent they will probably be less spectacular than their parent plant. We will see what transpires.



Camellia "Kamo Honami"

The major task at this time is cleaning up the paths and removing trailer loads of fallen leaves and tree debris. This is being put into a series of heaps where over the next year it will turn into humus and then go onto the garden beds. In particular, the oak leaves will be much appreciated by the rhododendrons. The other task is controlling the weeds which are doing very well, and they too find their way onto the compost heap. All in all, it is a busy time.

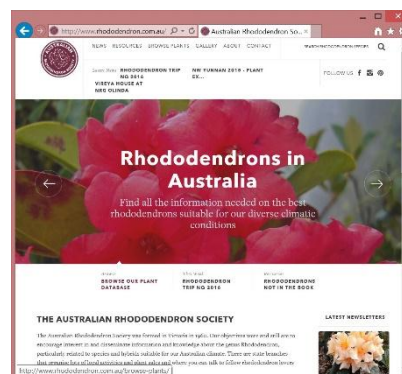
However the rhododendrons are showing signs of a good flowering season ahead and there is a lot to look forward to.



Notice Board

National Rhododendron Website

The National website www.rhododendron.com.au is now operational. We will be making arrangements to have our current newsletter published on the site, along with other relevant information from South Australian branch. We encourage members to use this online resource.



Cutting Day 2015 Successes

The Society's attempt to propagate hardy varieties suitable for South Australian conditions (primarily Adelaide Hills) appears to have met with some success.

It is therefore important to register propagated rhododendrons from the 2015 Cutting Day. This will enable us to know how many plants and the variety that will be ready to sell at the annual Plant Sale in October 2016.

Please inform us of what you will have available for the October sale. You can email your list to news.editor@sarhodo.org.au or submit to the Secretary at the June meeting.

Thank you to those members who have notified us.

Permission to publish Member's e-mail addresses

Neutrog has requested a list of members and their e-mail addresses. Our Secretary, Milton Bowman is not willing to supply this information without member's permission.

Please notify the Secretary, Milton Bowman, ASAP, if you give permission for your e-mail address to be forwarded to Neutrog.

Neutrog orders have been submitted and members will be notified when the order is delivered.

Some Useful References

Flemings nursery has produced a number of useful guides for the home gardener, such as

http://www.flemings.com.au/documents/fruit_trees_and_vines_guide.pdf.

They can be accessed on Fleming's web site <http://www.flemings.com.au/helpguides.asp>.

One of the guides concerns pruning techniques, which may be useful as members consider pruning fruit trees during the winter months.

Another excellent book mentioned on John Lamb's Saturday program is "Pruning for Fruit" by Bruce Morphet.

Master Classes at the MLBG

The following Master classes will be held at the MLBG on the dates listed.

Pruning for Fruit - Principles and Practice	Thursday July 14 th -9.00am-1.15pm	Urrbrae Agricultural High School
Advanced Plant Propagation	Sunday August 7 th or Wednesday August 10 th -10.00am-3pm	MLBG nursery
Flowering Shrubs for a cool climate	Sunday, August 21 st (focusing on Magnolias & Camellias) 9.00am-12.30pm	MLBG nursery
	Sunday September 28 th (focusing on Rhododendrons & Camellias) 9.00am-12.30pm	MLBG nursery
The Art of Bonsai	Sunday, September 4 th (limit of 10 students) – 10.00am-3pm	MLBG nursery
Ferns for your Garden	Monday, September 26 th -10.00am-12.30pm	MLBG lower car park
Unfurling the inner beauty of Ferns	Wednesday, October 12 th -10.00am-3.00pm	MLBG

