



Rhododendrons South Australia

Australian Rhododendron Society Inc. South Australian Branch

Issue 101-September 2016

August Meeting – Annual General Meeting



The AGM of the SA branch of the Australian Rhododendron Society was held at the August meeting. Recent proposed changes to the constitution were accepted unanimously and a vote of thanks was proposed to Lisa and Adam Gamble for their work in producing the new constitution. Voting took place for office bearers for 2016/2017 and all nominees were elected unopposed. The following members were congratulated on their appointment.



Executive Committee:

President (2016-2017)	<i>Belinda Cullum</i>	Librarians	<i>David & Ann Matison</i>
Vice president	<i>Robert Hatcher</i>	Newsletter editors	<i>Bronwyn Illman & Nataliya Popova</i>
Secretary	<i>Milton Bowman</i>	National Council delegate	<i>Jeff Jenkinson</i>
Treasurer	<i>Peter Wiadrowski</i>	Committee member	<i>Robyn Wall</i>

The outgoing President, Robert Hatcher, was thanked for his leadership over the past 12 months and his ongoing significant contribution to the society.

The meeting concluded with an educational and entertaining quiz run by Robert Hatcher. The winning team was led by Jeff Jenkinson. The raffle, won by Penny Maclaren, was Rhododendron Crossbill.



The plant sale followed the pattern trialled at the 2015 AGM where plants were purchased from the Raywood nursery at Delamere and sold to members. This was a very successful venture with the majority of the plants being eagerly snapped up by members. The remainder will be available at the next meeting and then any leftovers will be sold at the annual plant sale. Thanks to Quentin Woollaston from Raywood who, not only sold us the plants at a very reduced price, but also generously gave an additional tray of plants to aid the society.

Bloom of the Month – Rhododendron Rosalie?



This lovely bloom of unknown parentage has flowered in Philip and Myriam Sampson's garden for the first time in twenty years. If any of our knowledgeable members know of this plant and its history we would be keen to find out more information and will mark it down for propagation next February.

Philip believes he purchased it from Cleveland nursery and Rod Wadham suggested its name.

Bird of the Month – Crimson Rosella

Blue cheeked rosella with red, yellow or orange body and blue wings and tail. One form of the Crimson rosella has a crimson body, darker in the north of the state and occurring from Kangaroo Island to Cairns, Qld. The other form is the Yellow Rosella with a yellow body and found in the riverine forests of the Murray, Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and lower Darling Rivers. Intergrades between the Crimson and Yellow Rosellas are known as the Adelaide Rosella and have decreasing intensity of red from south to north in SA between Fleurieu Peninsula, Flinders Ranges and Murray River.



From the Propagating Bench by Richard Illman

Cuttings of rhododendrons taken in February, 2016, should now be starting to grow away. They can have a regular spray of a dilute fertilizer to help promote healthy growth. Seaweed products can still be used in a dilute form. It is also important to keep an eye on your propagating boxes as the weather warms and direct sunlight may impact on the boxes. If the plants grow rapidly you may want to consider moving the whole box into more shade so they receive ideal conditions prior to potting on in autumn 2017.



Maple Grafts

Any members who attempted to graft maples earlier this year should find that the grafts have started to move. The top section of the parent plant can be carefully removed, thus allowing the graft to receive full value of the plant nutrition.





There are early, mid-season and late flowering Rhodos. The first to bloom during winter are Sir Robert Peel, Sir John Waterer, Mrs Henry Shillson and Christmas Cheer. These are followed by Cornubia, Red Admiral and Chevalier Felix du Sauvage. These early varieties can have their blooms damaged by rain or hail, but they do not suffer from petal blight. Petal blight is a fungus that can overnight reduce lovely flowers into a brown, pulpy mass. It can be controlled by spraying with a fungicide just before the flower buds open. Bayleton is the fungicide recommended. Once the weather warms up this fungus can appear quite suddenly.



Azalea before an attack of Petal Blight



Azalea suffering from Petal Blight

October and early November is the time when the majority of Rhodos put on their marvellous display, but there are later blooming Rhodos that flower during December. These include *Fragrans Rosea*, *Maddenii*, *Virginalis*, *Tally Ho* and *Gomer Waterer*. More shade is needed for these varieties to protect the blooms from the hot summer sun.



Rh. Sir Robert Peel



Rh. Red Admiral

Well-rotted animal manure, compost, pea straw and slow release fertilisers are the most suitable fertilisers to use during spring. Only apply to moist soil and don't be too heavy-handed with artificial fertilisers.

Warmer days will also see the appearance of the dreaded lace bug. Confidor is a safe spray to use to protect your rhodos. It is also the best spray to prevent the pear and cherry slug from attacking cherries, pears, hawthorns and amelanchiers. It is a systemic spray, so does not need to be used at frequent intervals.

Roses are now growing rapidly, and unfortunately our Adelaide rosellas (see Bird of the month) seem to delight in nipping off the new growths. A few pieces of tape from old cassette recorders, strips of aluminium foil, pieces of anti-bird netting or even a little tinsel, will help to deter them. Once the new growth becomes firmer and stronger the birds seem to lose interest.

Cream and yellow rhodos always seem to be popular. A pleasing effect can be achieved by planting blue muscari, lobelias, ajuga or polyanthus around the rhodos. Blue rhodos are very much sought after. Blue Peter, Susan, and Blue Crown are larger growers, while smaller, more compact varieties are Blue Diamond, Blue Tit, Florence Mann and Bluette.



Roses attacked by parrots



Rhododendron Blue Tit

Don't forget to keep plants in containers well watered, and check to see if the drainage holes are blocked. There will be so much to see and enjoy from now on in the Adelaide Hills.

Next Month's Meeting

The September meeting will be held at 8pm on Wednesday, 21st at the Crafers hall. The main agenda item will be a Q&A panel, so please come armed with all those questions you have always wanted answered. It will also be an opportunity for members to bring any plants (or samples of) that have problems and get expert advice on what has gone wrong and how the problem can be rectified. This meeting will be an ideal opportunity for old and new members to learn more about growing rhododendrons.

Other items for discussion will be the annual plant sale to be held on Sunday, 25th September at the lower car park of the MLBG from 10.00am - 4.00pm. A roster for the day and allocation of duties will need to be developed.

Please remember to bring any suitable plants (propagated in 2015) to the meeting so we can ascertain those available for sale on the 25th and prepare photos that can be used to inform potential buyers of their characteristics. If possible, please send a list of such plants to either Bronwyn or Nataliya prior to the meeting.

Please don't forget to bring a plate to share for supper and a plant for the "Pot Luck" stall.



The Book that we decided to look at this month is “The Rhododendrons of Sabah, Malaysia Borneo. By George Argent, Anthony Lamb and Anthea Phillips. Published in 2007 by Natural History Publications (Borneo) and Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

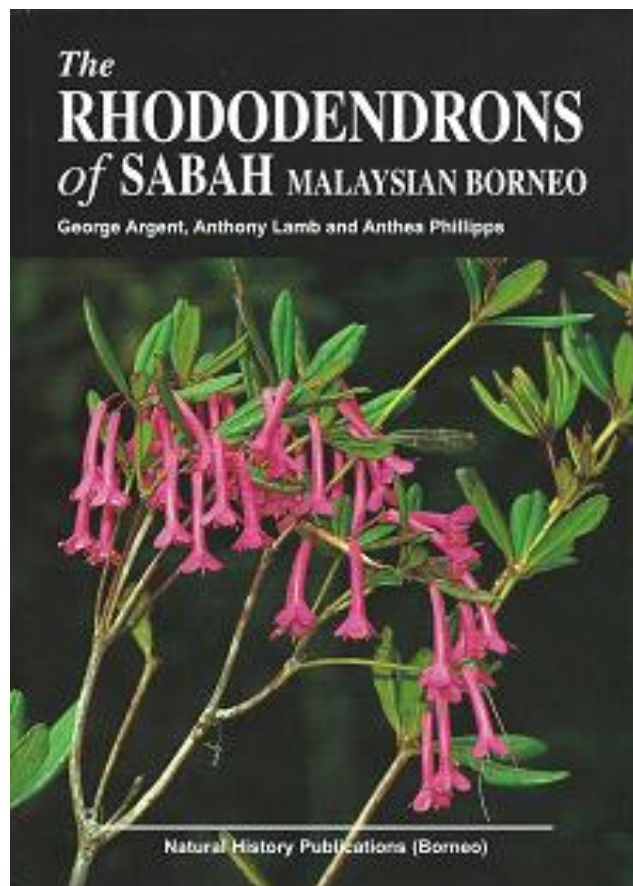
We hear about plant hunting expeditions to China, but less frequently we hear about Borneo. According to the authors there are 55 species that have been recorded from Borneo 42 of those from Sabah, the northern most state. 26 of these are from the mountain sides of Mount Kinabalu. There are also a number of Vireyas that have been collected by the authors. Samples of plants have been taken back to Edinburgh and propagation so that if needs be they can be repatriated back to their native habitat in the future.

As Mount Kinabah is the highest peak in Southeast Asia the book starts with descriptions of vegetation types which range from deep valleys to the top of the mountain. It also list the rhododendrons have been found among each of the vegetation types.

Most of the book comprises of a detailed description of each of the plants listed, its location, appearance and other interesting facts. Each is accompanied by a photo or beautiful painting of the flower.

The book concludes with a very detailed glossary.

For the experts this book would be interesting for the detailed descriptions. For the interested it is worth borrowing for the beautiful pictures. It is also interesting to read how dedicated and committed the collectors can be.



Celebrating member's gardens



Vireya rhododendrons in Singapore Gardens by the bay - Lianne Healey



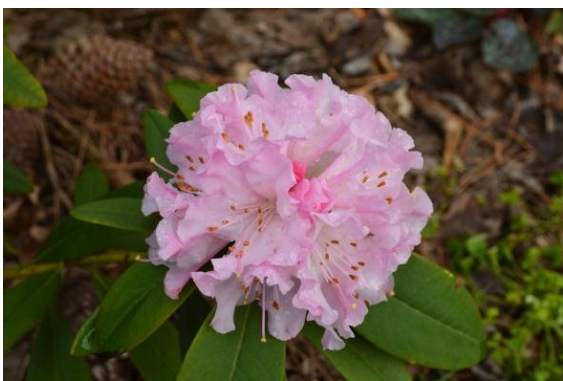
Prunus 'Elvin's'



*Rhododendron Countess of Haddington –
Richard Illman*



Viburnum burkwoodii – Richard Illman



Rhododendron Christmas Cheer-Nataliya



Rhododendron Boulter's cream – Philip Sampson

Tales from Forest Lodge by Milton Bowman



This month has seen a moderation of the weather, the weekly storms have started to lose their vigour and there are now occasional warmer days. However it is still not the time to pack away the winter gear. We still get days when it is warm and sunny down on the plains but drizzling, overcast and cold here in Stirling. For example a week ago it was 16C in Adelaide, but only 10 degrees here. In

retrospect the winter has been quite a tough season for the trees. We have had 4 large trees blown over and whilst this means that there is plenty of firewood for next year, it does show that we have had a real winter. The garden is starting to come to life and the deciduous trees are getting that brilliant light green that lets you know that spring is here. The grass is now growing and it really is interesting to watch the way that the grass suddenly changes from pale green to dark green as the soil starts to warm up. The daffodils are flowering and tulips have sprouted and the rhododendrons are on the verge of doing their thing. The rain continued and Forest Lodge has had 123mm this month. This year we have had 966mm, well above last year's total. All in all things are looking good.



Rhododendron Jeanette Clarke

This wonderful early Australian rhododendron was bred by Vic Boulter in 1981. Its parentage is unknown. Plants of this hybrid are often available through Bunnings outlets and it appears to be quite hardy in the Adelaide Hills.

Notice Board

Annual Plant Sale Arrangements

The annual plant sale will be held at the lower car park of the MLBG on Sunday, September 25th from 10am to 4pm. Please keep this date free on your calendar as members will be asked to assist with the running of the day. **Details of rosters etc. will be arranged at the September meeting but the most important component of this meeting will be to have members bring the plants they have successfully propagated from the 2015 cutting day that will be available for sale.** Please provide Nataliya or Bronwyn with the names of the rhododendrons you will have available for sale. Once the range of plants is known we can produce a photographic record to be available for the public to peruse on the sale day. Remember we are trying to promote these hardy varieties as ones that will be successful in the Adelaide hills. The following represent the propagated Rhodos that have been promised for the plant sale.

<i>Arboreum</i>	<i>Elegans</i>	<i>Mrs W Agnew</i>
<i>Christmas Cheer</i>	<i>Genoveva</i>	<i>Mum</i>
<i>Clyde Alva Newton Whibley</i>	<i>Glenn</i>	<i>Ponticum</i>
<i>Cunnighams White</i>	<i>Gomer Waterer</i>	<i>Sir Edward Stirling</i>
<i>Cynthia</i>	<i>Hettie D Whibley</i>	<i>Sir Robert Peel</i>
<i>Dorothy Whibley</i>	<i>May Sye</i>	

Angus Stewart - 2017 China Tour - Rhododendrons

Dear Secretary of the Australian Rhododendron Society of South Australia,

In 2017 Angus Stewart, horticulturalist, author and TV presenter, is leading a tour to Yunnan, China, on behalf of Opulent Journeys.

With the obvious botanical relevance this tour has to the Australian Rhododendron Society of South Australia, I was wondering whether you would mind forwarding the attached flyer onto your members.

One of the unusual aspects of Opulent Journeys tours is the opportunity guests have to make a little money for their associated horticultural groups, for example the Australian Rhododendron Society of South Australia, as a fee of \$250 per person will be paid to their local association when a member books a tour.

In addition, I thought I would take this opportunity to let you know that Angus would also be very happy to speak at a Club meeting about his findings in Yunnan and share some of his exciting discoveries from previous trips.

I hope this is not too much of an imposition. Many thanks for your support.

Kind regards,

Bronwyn Blake

www.gardeningwithangus.com.au

Master Classes at the MLBG

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

Flowering Shrubs for a cool climate	Sunday September 25th (focusing on Rhododendrons & Camellias) 9.00am-12.30pm	MLBG nursery
The Art of Bonsai	Sunday, September 4th (limit of 10 students) – 10.00am-3pm	MLBG nursery
Ferns for your Garden	Monday, September 26th- 10.00am-12.30pm	MLBG lower car park
Unfurling the inner beauty of Ferns	Wednesday, October 12th- 10.00am-3.00pm	MLBG

Neutrog Spring Orders



Members are notified that the spring order from Neutrog is now available. Please find the order form, price and product list attached to this newsletter. Bronwyn will accept orders by post or e-mail before last week of September (i.e. week beginning September 26th). Members will be notified when their order is

delivered. Payment for the orders can be made to Peter Wiadrowski.

Year round fertilising for year round health

Like humans and animals, plants require regular feeding throughout the year – at least once in each season. Happy, healthy, well nourished plants are more resistant to pests, diseases, heat stress and frost.

Vegetables & Herbs: Mix some Flockt Fuel through the soil before planting spring vegetables and herbs to help give your seedlings the best start in life. Water in well with GOGO Juice. As your cabbages, such as tomatoes and eggplants begin to set flowers you can feed them with Sudden Impact for Flowers, the potassium, calcium and magnesium boost will help produce large and tasty tomatoes during summer.

It's time to plant potatoes! Mix two handfuls per square metre of Seawings through the soil before planting your seed potatoes. As you cover the emerging shoots with straw or mulch, the occasional dose of a handful of Flockt Fuel per square metre is ideal.

Flowering Plants: Sprinkle some Seelie Soil for Orchids over any potted colour you have or are planting out this season. You'll be rewarded with cascades of colour over spring and summer. Feed your roses and all other flowering plants (except natives) with Sudden Impact for Roses. Water it all in with GOGO Juice to encourage a faster uptake of the nutrients by the plant.

Fruit Trees: Lightly tip prune citrus trees to encourage new growth and spread Goggin's for Fruit and Citrus around the big zones of the plant. Repeat this application every 2 weeks until the end of February.

Natives: As natives finally flowering, graze them back by up to one third and feed with two good handfuls of Seawings per plant.

Lawns: Spring is often the start of new growth for lawns. Feed new lawns with a nitrogen based fertiliser such as Liberate or Sudden Impact for Lawns for lush and healthy green lawns, or the totally organic alternative is Earth & Soul.

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Spring Garden Tips

