

Newsletter of the ARSV



Tesselaar Gardening and Plants Expo 2017

Attention all Members

Your Society will be running a stall at the 2017 Tesselaar Gardening and Plants Expo. The last page of the newsletter lists the plants we will have for sale and members are reminded they are entitled to a 25% discount. The ARSV volunteers have been working hard for two years to propagate and prepare these plants for sale and there are species and hybrids unavailable anywhere else in Australia.

This is an important fund raising event for us so please get your family and friends to come along and enjoy the day. It is a spectacular event with over 40 nurseries and plant growers exhibiting and selling.

John O'Hara, our president will be delivering a talk on Saturday 23rd at 11 am.

Venue: Tesselaar Gardens, 357 Monbulk Rd, Silvan, VIC.

Dates: Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd April 9 am – 4 pm

Cost (covers both days): Adult - \$18.00; Concession - \$15.00; Child (Under 16 yrs.)- Free; Groups (4 or more)- \$14.00 pp.

Website: <http://gardeningandplantsexpo.com.au/>

MEMBERS - We have loads of other rhododendrons for sale, both asiatics and vireyas, so if there is something you are chasing let us know, we might have it and can bring it to the expo for sale. Contact any committee member (see below).

R. syringoides? new to Australian collections

The latest Emu Valley newsletter contains an article about a potential species new to cultivation in Australia. The author, Maurice Kupsch, sent pictures then flowers to Andrew Rouse who has keyed it out to *R. syringoides*, not yet grown in Australia but on the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources permitted seed list. To view this lovely plant check out the website and download the Emu Valley newsletter at <http://www.rhododendron.com.au/article/emu-valley-newsletter-march-2017/>.

New Guinea vireyas in Melbourne gardens



The Michael Black form of *R. zoelleri* flowered for Clare Rouse in March. The plant, growing in the ground under the canopy of a ginkgo tree, is approaching its 50th birthday; it was grown from the seed collected by Michael Black in 1968 from near Wabag, Enga Province, PNG. Cuttings from this plant have been established in the Vireya House at the National Rhododendron Gardens Olinda.

Andrew Rouse

Committee							
John O'Hara	President	johnohara@optusnet.com.au	03 9593 1323	Simon Begg		simonwbegg@gmail.com	03 9728 4466
Andrew Rouse	Vice-President	awrouse@bigpond.com	0424 750 406	Francis Crome	Newsletter editor	francis@crome.net.au	0417 730 291
Michael Hare	Secretary	vicrhodo@gmail.com	0405 403 607	Dan Macleod		dan.macleod@parks.vic.gov.au	0400 594 319
Prue Crome	Treasurer	prue@crome.net.au	0419 659 741	Alex Pottage		niceplants53@gmail.com	03 5786 1595
Graham Price		lithic01@bigpond.net.au	0409 639 448	Walter Lobbezoo	Librarian	wlobbezoo@parks.vic.gov.au	03 9751 1704

Rhododendron in focus: *R. annae*

Subsection *Irrorata*.

This is a little-known species which I obtained from Ken Gillanders in Tasmania. The form we have is probably the subspecies *laxiflorum* which has longer leaves and spotted flowers compared to subspecies *R. annae* ssp. *annae*. Our plant is growing near the stone bridge and is now around two metres high and flowers in October, with attractive white flowers spotted reddish-purple. (see photo). They flowers look similar to *R. aberconwayi* but the leaves are totally different. This species comes from Guizhou and Yunnan in the eastern Himalayas and is found in forests at 1400 to 3300 metres.

We have three new plants of *R. annae*, grown from Yunnan seed, planted in the area above the lake at the NRG, Olinda.

Alan Kepert.



Companion animal – Chinese Serow

The Chinese or White-maned Serow *Capricornis milneedwardsii* is a rarely seen goat-antelope found in hill forests in China and possibly northern Southeast Asia. It is a browser and includes *Rhododendron* leaves in its diet. This specimen was photographed in Qinghai province and is noticeably affected by mange. There is much confusion over the taxonomy of serows and little specific ecological information on this particular species. As far as is known it is generally solitary and produces one young at a time. This and the Indochinese Serow *C. maritimus* are sometimes considered a single species with the Sumatran Serow *C. sumatrensis*.



***Rhododendron apradae* U. Rai et D. Lama**

This new species was discovered in Singalila National Park in Darjeeling District, West Bengal, India in wet temperate forest between 2500 – 2800 m altitude and appears to be endemic to the Darjeeling Hills.

It is a tree to 10 m high resembling *R. arboreum* subsp. *cinnamomeum* (Wallich ex G. Don) Lindley and *R. grande* Wight and distinguished by the indumentum on the underside of the leaf which is single layered and light brown in the new species but silvery in *R. grande* and double layered in *R. arboreum* subsp. *cinnamomeum*. The flowers are spectacular (see photo from the original paper) with the petals 5-8 lobed and up to 6 cm long, born in heads of 14 to 18. The new species has been named after the highly respected teacher of the two authors - Dr. Abhaya Prasad Das.

Other distinguishing features of *R. apradae* are the leaves which are more elliptical, the indistinct calyx lobes and the stamens which are hairy in the lower 1/3rd. The stamens are pubescent basally in *R. grande* and glabrous in *R. arboreum* subsp. *cinnamomeum*.

Upakar Rai and Dorjay Lama. 2016. *Rhododendron apradae* U. Rai et D. Lama sp. nov. from Darjeeling Himalaya in India *Pleione* 10(2): 370 - 374.



***Rhododendron stanleyi* S. James et Argent**

This new Vireya (section *Hadranthe*) is a shrubby tree to 2m and was discovered on the summit of Mt Yule, Central Province PNG at 3258 m growing amongst rocks with *R. alticola* in subalpine forest and montane shrubbery. It is most similar to *R. haematophthalmum* and keys out to that species in the second edition of Argent's vireya book. *R. stanleyi* is distinguished by having tapering not truncate to cordate leaves, smooth under leaf surfaces after the scales have gone, slender pedicels, a small, disc-shaped rather than large, lobed stigma and rough, longitudinal striated twigs without protruding scale bases. It also resembles *R. scabridibracteum* Sleumer (section *Schistanthe*, subsection *Euvireya*.), but the latter has a larger flower truss with a "different disposition", and lacks the prominent papillae on the underside of the leaves that *R. stanleyi* has.

James, S. and Argent, G. 2017. *Rhododendron stanleyi* S. James & Argent: a new rhododendron species (Ericaceae, subgenus vireya) from Papua New Guinea. *Edinburgh Journal of Botany* 1-6. doi:10.1017/S096042861700004X.



New library book

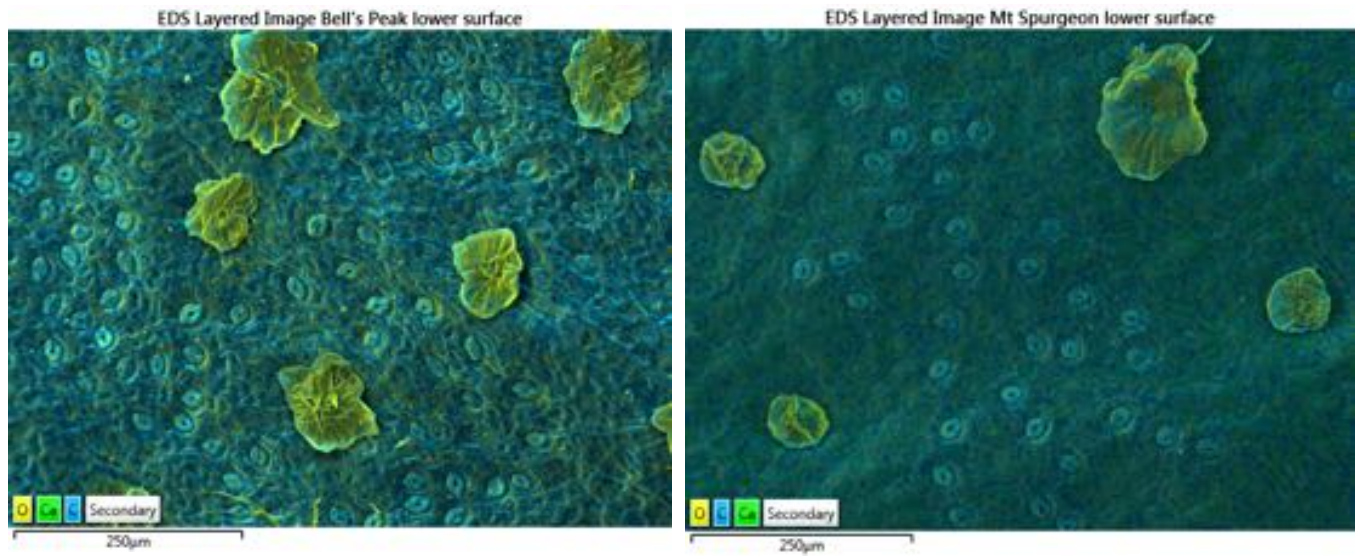
The library has recently acquired a copy of the new book on big-leaf rhodos - Church, V. , Smith, G. and Greenfield P. 2015. *Big-Leaf Rhododendrons: Growing the Giants of the Genus*. David Bateman Limited, New Zealand. This is a beautifully illustrated book covering the 31 species and subspecies from the sections *Falconera* and *Grandia* known at the time and some 40 hybrids. Many of the excellent photos are from the great collection at Pukeiti in New Zealand.

NQ Expeditions continued – analysis of leaf surfaces

Our president, John O’Hara, amongst his many talents, uses an electron microscope and has been studying the leaf surfaces of *R. lochiaie* (Bell’s Peak) and *R. viriosum* (Mt Spurgeon) recently collected on the NQ expeditions. John has sent in some very early notes as follows.

“On the lower surface the Mt Spurgeon leaf has a significantly lower number of scales compared with that of the Bell’s Peak leaf and almost no scales on the upper surface whereas the Bell’s Peak leaf has some. The number of scales seems to be the only difference, as the size and shape of the scales seems to be very similar. There does not seem to be any difference in the stomata. The coloured images show the scales as yellow because they are relatively higher in oxygen.

This work is only preliminary. It used wild collected, dried leaves and I will see if the leaf scales are consistent with other lochiaes vs viriosums from other locations and if it stays the same for cultivated plants. If the scale numbers are different and consistent at certain locations then it will be interesting to look at Mt Finnigan leaves because this location is thought to be an outlier.”



Tesselaar expo - Rhododendrons for sale by ARSV

Asiatics	Asiatics Hybrids		Vireyas	
2 <i>R. amesiaie</i>	8 Purple Lace	15 Grace Seabrook	10 <i>R.</i> ‘Haloed Gold’	9 <i>R. hellwigii</i> hybrid (red)
2 <i>R. auritum</i>	9 Purple Gown	7 Midnight	2 <i>R.</i> ‘Our Marcia’	12 <i>R. tuba</i>
3 <i>R. campanulatum</i>	9 Tamarindos	4 Spinulosum	14 <i>R.</i> ‘Pink Star’	8 <i>R. rarepidotum</i>
2 <i>R. dasycladum</i>	3 Bloodline	2 Winsome	8 <i>R.</i> ‘Highland White Jade’	13 <i>R. loranthiflorum</i> ‘Sri Chinmoy’
2 <i>R. dauricum</i>	10 Anica Bricone	3 Teddy bear	10 <i>R.</i> ‘Popcorn’	3 <i>R. jasminiflorum</i> ssp hessri x, konori
7 <i>R. elegantulum</i>	2 Houston Pink	2 Floral Fantasy	7 <i>R.</i> ‘Vicki Griffith’	1 <i>R.</i> ‘Lovey’
2 <i>R. hodgsonii</i>	1 Rubicon	2 Helene Schiffner	3 <i>R.</i> ‘Tropic Flare’	1 <i>R.</i> ‘Sushmitam Rouse’
2 <i>R. lyi</i>	3 Maharani	1 Schneebucket	3 <i>R.</i> ‘Red Tubular’	2 <i>R. radians</i> x <i>christianae</i>
3 <i>R. macrosepalum</i> ‘Linearifolium’	4 Constanze	1 White pearl	8 <i>R.</i> ‘Ivory Coast’	1 <i>R.</i> ‘Simbu Sunset’
2 <i>R. moupinense</i>	11 Blutopia	2 <i>R. grande</i> hybrids	5 <i>R.</i> ‘Thai Prince’	1 <i>R.</i> ‘Gardenia Odyssey’
2 <i>R. rubiginosum</i>			7 <i>R.</i> ‘Flourish of Trumpets’	1 <i>R.</i> ‘Littlest Angel’
2 <i>R. spinuliferum</i>			15 <i>R.</i> ‘Saxon Glow’	9 <i>R.</i> ‘Craig Farragher’
2 <i>R. wiltonii</i>			12 <i>R.</i> ‘Lomac’	4 <i>R.</i> ‘Silver Thimbles’
			6 <i>R. stenophyllum</i> x <i>luraluense</i> ?	3 <i>R. luraluense</i> x <i>macgregoriae</i> x <i>rubieniflorum</i>
			13 <i>R. hellwigii</i> hybrid (rose pink)	14 <i>R.</i> ‘St. Valentine’
We will also have more advanced rhododendrons supplied by a wholesaler for an even greater choice!				

IF THERE ARE ANY OTHER SPECIES OR HYBRIDS THAT ARE NOT ON THE ABOVE LIST AND THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO ACQUIRE JUST LET US KNOW – WE MAY HAVE IT