



Rhododendrons South Australia

Australian Rhododendron Society Inc. South Australian Branch

Issue 99-July 2016

Last Month's Meeting

Our guest speaker at the June meeting was our President, Robert Hatcher, who, having recently returned from a trip to the UK with his wife Jacki, presented members with an interesting overview of his travels. Highlights included his report on the Centenary of the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia group of the RHS. Robert also visited many private gardens which showcased these plants and were well represented in his colourful slides.



The raffle of Rhododendron Black Prince was won by Rebecca Kennedy.



Next Meeting

This will be held at the Crafers Hall on Wednesday, July 20th, at 8pm and our guest speaker will be Cameron Peebles from MLBG. He will present the second instalment of his trip to China.



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

Rainbow Lorikeet - *Trichoglossus haematodu*



A large, brightly coloured bird-bold, noisy, never confused with other birds. A bit smaller than a Rosella.

Thirty years ago it was uncommon in our gardens but now is a regular visitor, often in flocks of twenty or more.

Always calls as it flies, and reveals vivid red armpits as it flies over you.

Will come to a domestic feeder and will take nectar, apples, and seed, especially sunflower.

When challenged at a feeder, it aggressively jumps or hops to push away bigger birds such as rosellas.

Nest from July to January in hollow limbs fairly high up.

Bloom of the Month – Azalea Madonna



A Belgian Indica. Excellent choice for indoor pots. Cross between *Rh. simsii*, *macronatum* and *indicum*. Can grow up to 1.5m tall and tolerates deer and rabbits.

From the Propagation Bench by Richard Illman

This time of year is very much a downtime for propagating and most sensible gardeners are spending time in front of the fire with a good red. Those who are still looking for material to propagate could consider investigating their *Sarcococca* plants where they may find some suckers which can be removed and planted in pots. These suckers, if removed carefully, will come up with roots and grow away successfully. *Sarcococca* belong to the box family and have become a must for winter gardens, where their cheery, dark glossy foliage and all pervading scent do much to relieve the bleakest days of winter.



As we mentioned last month, if you have some seedling Japanese maple, this month is the time when you can convert them into something much more desirable by grafting onto them a scion from the large range of dissected leaf weepers that are now in the market place. You could either increase the number you already have or obtain material from a friend who has a variety you may desire. The process

is not difficult and simply requires a sharp blade, a steady hand, and reasonable eyesight. The methodology is freely available on the internet or speak to me if you would like some guidance.



Acer Koto Ito Komachi

The Month Ahead by Bill Voigt



July is an ideal time for pruning deciduous trees and shrubs. Roses, both bush and standards, should be pruned to the shape of an upturned umbrella. Always cut above an outward facing bud, with a slanting cut to prevent water from collecting on the cut branch, as this encourages the formation of rot and fungus infection. When pruning remove any suckers that may be coming from below the ground. They arise from the stock on which the rose is budded, and if not removed they will greatly weaken the rose bush. Established Hydrangeas often need to be improved by removing some of the weaker, spindly growths and

shortening the main stems where there are double buds (i.e. one on each side of the stem) from which flowers will be produced. If you wish to keep the flowers blue, apply a dressing of Alum (Aluminium sulphate) to the soil, and water it well in. Only apply this when Hydrangeas are dormant.



Flowering Crab Apples and Cherries need only a little shaping as they grow but fruit trees, particularly, peaches, nectarines and plums need more drastic cutting. If leaf curl has been a problem on your Nectarines and Peaches spray before bud burst with an appropriate anti-fungal spray. Most hardware stores carry stocks of the correct spray to use.

Rhodos can be pruned immediately after flowering. Prune just above growth joints. As Rhodos grow, some inside limbs will be shaded and become weak. It is better to remove these

spindly growths so that better air circulation can occur. Evergreen azaleas can be sheared or clipped every year to create more compact, rounded plants, although some gardeners may prefer a more natural sprawling effect.

During the colder months some of the large leafed Rhodos may hang their leaves, but if they still maintain a healthy green colour there is no problem. In countries where winter snow fall is the norm, the drooping leaves are meant to shed the snow.

This condition does not occur with Rhodos that originate from more temperate regions e.g. Maddenii and Vireya species.

For colour in late spring plant Larkspurs, Sweet William and Nemesis. The camellia pictured in last month's notes, "Kamo Honami", has probably the longest flowering period of any camellia.

Golden daffodils bordering a Forsythia shrub make a wonderful display in early spring. Forsythias strike readily from hardwood cuttings.

Soon we will notice the days becoming longer, that is, the daylight hours, so there will be more opportunities to work in the garden.

Reliable Flowering House Plants

In the June newsletter I mentioned several plants that could thrive inside without the need for glasshouse levels of warmth and light. Here are a few more you may like to try.



Saintpaulia (African violet) – place in a bright position and allow the surface to dry out between watering. Apply water from below or use a wick system. They are best kept above 10°C and avoid moving once happy.

Streptocarpus (Cape primrose)

Site these plants in a north or south facing window out of direct light and keep moist but

drier in winter. Both, under and over watering results in wilting leaves. Dry plants generally survive, but those with root rot die. Like African violets, they enjoy temperatures above 10°C. Repot in the spring, then water and feed freely- new leaves and flowers will result. Removing old flower stems will encourage more blooms.



Winter Bark

A recent article in the RHS magazine “The Garden” highlighted a range of trees and shrubs that exhibit good bark colour during the winter months. There is, therefore, no need to have a winter garden that lacks colour. Some suggestions are;

Olive green to yellow - *Cornus sericea* “Bud’s yellow”, *Acer negundo* “Winter lightning”

White bloomed to silver- *Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii* “Silver shadow”



Cinnamon brown to black – *Acer griseum*



Dark red to coral pink – *Acer palmatum* “Sango Kaku”

July in the Garden



Spring Crocus (a little early!)



Rhododendron Winter Beauty (still flowering in July)



Seed forming on Clematis Nepauliensis



Camellia High Fragrance



Rhododendron Sir John Waterer



Camellia Happy Higo

This season is shaping to be a most unusual one with many plants flowering out of season. Early spring crocus have emerged and Galanthus are almost a month early. The camellias too are making an early appearance and several Rhododendrons are in flower.



Lilac primula

Tales from Forest Lodge by Milton Bowman



This month has been cold and stormy, the wind has been howling through the trees and over the last week of June it was bitterly cold. The staff at Mount Lofty Botanic Garden tell me that on Thursday 30th the combination of low temperature and high wind pushed the apparent temperature to less than zero degrees C. As a consequence not much gardening is being done at Forest Lodge apart from more tidying up

after the storms and clearing drains that block with windfall debris. The tanks are full and the spring in the grotto has started to flow, for the first time in several years. The soil is now saturated and things are looking good. The rainfall statistics explain a lot of these happenings, we had 191mm in June and this is above the long term average of 182mm, but more importantly this is on top of a very wet May. Rainfall to the end of June is 589mm which hopefully will continue on to give us a wet year. At the moment there are only a few plants flowering, the camellias are starting to get going, the gordonia has almost finished, but the luculia is in full flower and looking great.



Notice Board

SA Branch Newsletter on National Rhododendron Website

We have made arrangements to have our current newsletter published on the National website www.rhododendron.com.au, along with other relevant information from South Australian branch. We encourage members to use this online resource.



New stocks of Rhododendrons at Mt Barker Nursery



A wide range of large hybrid Rhododendrons and Vireyas have arrived at "The Garden Depot" at 14 Secker Road, Mount Barker. They are reasonably expensive but the plants are in very good health and well worth a look. Vireya "Blondie" is one of the plants available and is recommended by N.S.W Vireya grower, Neil Puddy, as a very fragrant flower and a good variety to grow.

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.

Special event



Australian Garden History Society
SA Branch
STEVE HAILSTONE
Presents DESIGNING WITH PLANTS AT GREAT DIXTER
Wednesday 27th July 2016
6.30PM – light refreshments
7PM - presentation
Coventry Library
Mt Barker Road, Stirling

Master Classes at the MLBG

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

Advanced Plant Propagation	Sunday August 7th or Wednesday August 10th- 10.00am-3pm	MLBG nursery
Flowering Shrubs for a cool climate	Sunday, August 21st (focusing on Magnolias & Camellias) 9.00am-12.30pm	MLBG nursery
	Sunday September 28th (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

Gardeners Lunar Calendar

Another interesting online resource for keen gardeners – Lunar calendars – “Live in the rhythm of nature in Australia”.



[The Lunar calendar for home and garden](#)



[The Lunar calendar for Today](#)



[The Lunar gardener calendar](#)

