



Rhododendrons South Australia

Australian Rhododendron Society Inc. South Australian Branch

Issue 115-May 2018

President's Message

With various Society members about to embark on a variety of rhododendron related overseas activities it's made me wonder about the position our branch is situated in within the grand scheme of the national body. As a result, I think that the South Australian group deserves to be proud of the way in which they contribute to achieve the objectives of the Australian Rhododendron Society. This is accomplished in a variety of ways.

Intrepid and adventurous Henry Hancock is a tour member of the ARS expedition to Sabah and Mount Kinabalu in northern Borneo departing later this month, with a focus on the exploration of vireya rhododendrons in this region which is a recognised vireya hotspot. Around about the same time a number of members from our S.A. branch will be attending the American Rhododendron Society Spring Convention in Bremen, Germany and my understanding is that our group pretty much represents the full contingent of Australian delegates at this conference. Along with its pre and post tours this promises to be an amazing opportunity for broadening knowledge and appreciation of European rhododendron hybridisation and cultivation, as well as developing relationships with other delegates. As the year continues to unfold we can look forward to hearing the tales of our travellers at our future monthly meetings.

To add to our national standing, past S.A. president, Jeff Jenkinson, is now national president. In his report in the latest journal publication of "The Rhododendron" he encourages the branches to focus on local hybridists and their achievements by developing enduring records for all and future members and interested parties of the ARS. We can proudly thank a number of our members for facilitating this process here in South Australia; namely for Milton Bowman providing a useful historical account of Whibley and Waterer hybridisation, and Ann Matison in her role as joint librarian taking on a supervisory role of developing a more comprehensive reference record of the Whibley and Waterer hybrids.

I truly believe that the South Australian members of the ARS are doing a great job. Let's keep up the good work!

Last meeting



Dr Lucy Sutherland- Director of the Botanic Gardens



Tania with her raffle prize



Heather Waddy with our newest member "Ned"

Next Meeting

This will be held at the RSL Hall Stirling on Tuesday, May, 15th at 8pm. Ann Matison and Lianne Healey will present their experiences while travelling in Japan.

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

Bloom of the Month – Vireya Rhododendron Tuba & Azalea Paul Schame





From the Propagating bench *by Richard Illman*

Proposal for a 2nd Maple Grafting Workshop

We provided an opportunity last year for members to acquire skills for grafting maples and many members attended these workshops in late winter. It would be possible, if there is sufficient interest, to run these workshops again on a weekend at the end of July or early August (depending on weather conditions) or during the week if that is preferable. This would be held at 3 Linwood Avenue, Aldgate. If you are interested please let Richard or Bronwyn know so that information can be forwarded to you. You can help prepare for this workshop at this time of the year by finding and marking with a ribbon /cord any seedling maples that may have been growing in your garden. Choose ones that have stems at least pencil thickness and dig /pot them when they are dormant. If you attended last year and still have your root stock that did not graft successfully, you can re-use this plant. A good variety of dissectum and other maples will be available for grafting.



Acer Palmatum Shaina



Acer Palmatum Wotnong

*Please note that this article was previously published in Issue #63 - June 2012.

Rosella Parrots in South Australia

There are four Rosella parrots found in South Australia, if you include sub-species.

The Rosellas are the Eastern, the Crimson, the Adelaide and the Yellow.



Eastern Rosella

Modern DNA classifies the Crimson, the Adelaide and the Yellow as being only the Crimson Rosella.

But most bird field guides list the Adelaide & the Yellow as sub-species of the Crimson. The Yellow is found along the Murray, upstream from Walkers Flat into NSW. The Adelaide is found from Cape Jervis to up past Port Augusta.

There is a SA Crimson which is classified as a sub-species and is found on Kangaroo Island, and is a smaller and darker race than the Eastern States Crimson.

The main rosella found in our local hills gardens is the Adelaide Rosella. This bird has quite a range of colours, from reddish to pale yellow. Juveniles are greenish.

In our hills the Eastern Rosella is found in Belair National Park, Mount Barker but probably not yet seen in the Crafers, Stirling, Aldgate area. It is thought to have arrived in the Adelaide area as aviary escapees in the early 1920s.

In the eastern states the wild crimson can learn to land on human heads and arms for feeding, but the wild Adelaide will NEVER do this and is extremely flighty.



Crimson Rosella



Adelaide Rosella



Yellow Rosella

Librarian's Report *by Ann & David Matison*

Unfortunately the Rhododendron Society Library has yet to be moved to the new meeting location at the RSL Hall, which means of course that our members have not had access to the books contained therein for many months. Hopefully it will be up and running again very soon.

In the meantime if you are eager to read books about rhododendrons, azaleas or vireyas there are many available from book sellers on the internet. Most of our books have been sourced through that channel. If you are familiar with our collection you will recognise many titles that we have already acquired.

On a recent search I found a small collection of interesting Classic Reproductions. From reading the descriptions of the books they are, and I quote "this work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important, and as part of the knowledge base of civilisation as we know it." They have been copied directly from the originals, complete with errors, marks and blemishes. Among the Rhododendron books, those that come up most frequently are by William Watson 1858 -1925. As far as I can ascertain He was one of the Watson Brothers who ran a nursery in Islington, England at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th Century. They became interested in Rhododendron plants and would buy them from the early plant hunters and distribute them to the landed gentry who could afford to buy them. It would appear that William also had direct contact with some of the North American collectors and Nurserymen.

These books are no doubt interesting from an historical point of view, but probably not relevant to our library.

Happy reading

Tales from Forest Lodge *by Milton Bowman*



At last we have had some real rain, in fact what we had in April has been twice that we have had for the last 3 months. The 86.5mm was most welcome and as I write this it has been raining heavily and all is looking much better in the garden. April was unseasonably warm and this has stopped many trees from developing their Autumn colours this year. Most of the deciduous trees

have simply shown mild colouring and then have gone on to drop their leaves.

The dry and warm weather stressed many plants and some will not recover for a long time if at all. There are several Clethra trees and they have suffered badly and even the old ones struggled to cope. One 8yo plant looks as though it will die. The pest insects have had a field day, the lace bug has been active until the last week, and the thrip has been in plague proportions as it attacks the stressed viburnums and then spreads to the rhododendrons. Clearly stressed plants do not have the resistance that healthy and happy ones have.

Our new garden beds near the house continue to power along and it is almost incredible to make a comparison with rhododendrons planted there with the ones in the main garden. The new garden gets regular and adequate water coupled with a good fertiliser programme and the rhododendrons are growing rapidly and look very healthy with not a trace of the pest insects, whereas the plants in the main garden where there is severe competition for light, nutrients, and water are just surviving and are infested with thrip.

We have started planting out one of the new beds near the house with multiple rhododendrons and we hope that they do as well as the other new ones. If so they will be spectacular in a few years time.

Meanwhile it is great to see the effects of the recent rains, and it is even good to have some cold weather and light the fires again. There is something nice about sitting in front of a fire in the evening.

Happy gardening

Milton Bowman



A Double Hydrangea for the new garden

Notice Board

Autumn Neutrog orders

This was delivered late last month and we hope that all members have now collected their order. Thank you to Andrew Waterman, Milton Bowman, Barb Mynhart and Kevin Trenouth who generously gave of their time to pack the orders. The opportunity to have the order delivered to the MLBG and the assistance of Rob Hatcher is much appreciated.



Red Dragon Nursery Orders

The first trial order has been arranged and will arrive shortly. We are hopeful that this proves to be a successful trial and we will be able to continue our association with Andrew Lockett and fulfil all the member's requests.

Maple grafting workshop

Expression of interest in participating in maple grafting workshop that will be held in late July or early August is open to members. Please let Bronwyn or Richard Illman know if you are interested in participating in the workshop.

Masterclasses at Botanic Gardens

"Master Classes are specialist courses run by industry experts on relevant and current horticulture topics. They are a great opportunity to network with others with similar interests, extend your expertise and stay up to date with the latest techniques.

There are opportunities for people of all backgrounds at the Australian Centre of Horticultural Excellence, from those employed in a horticulture field, to those wanting to enter the industry to the home gardener wanting to extend their knowledge..." read more on [the website](#)

<p>Australian Native Bonsai</p> <p><u>Dates:</u> Sunday 27 May or Thursday 18 October <u>Time:</u> 10am to 3pm <u>Where:</u> Mount Lofty Botanic Garden Nursery</p> <p>*Book quickly - class size limited to 10 spots</p>	<p><i>Learn about the ancient art and science of Bonsai using Australian native plants from one of the Botanic Gardens of South Australia's leading horticulturists, Rob Hatcher.</i></p> <p><i>You'll learn about the best horticultural practices to construct, grow and care for your very own Australian native bonsai in this practical and hands-on Masterclass.</i></p>
<p>Pruning for Fruit: Principles and Practices</p> <p><u>Dates:</u> Sunday 1 July <u>Time:</u> 9am to 12pm or 1pm to 4pm <u>Where:</u> Mount Lofty Botanic Garden Nursery</p>	<p><i>Understanding optimal growing conditions and correct pruning techniques is fundamental to getting the best from your fruit trees. It allows you to control the fruit's size, shape and vigour.</i></p> <p><i>Participants in this workshop will learn the foundations of growing your own fruit trees and the correct pruning techniques to maintain good fruit size, quality and</i></p>

	<p><i>quantity and to keep your fruit trees bearing fruit throughout their productive life.</i></p>
<p>Advanced Plant Propagation: Leaf and Root cuttings, Grafting and Budding</p> <p><u>Dates:</u> Thursday 9 August or Sunday 26 August <u>Time:</u> 10am to 3pm <u>Where:</u> Mount Lofty Botanic Garden</p>	<p><i>If you would like to learn advanced techniques of plant propagation, the Advanced Plant Propagation Masterclass is for you. An extension of the Plant Propagation Principles & Practices (not a pre-requisite), this class will dig deeper into propagation techniques for certain types of plants.</i></p>
<p>Curator Tour - Behind the Blooms: magnolias, camellias and rhododendrons</p> <p><u>Date:</u> Thursday 6 September <u>Time:</u> 9:30am to 12:00pm <u>Where:</u> Mount Lofty Botanic Garden</p>	<p><i>Participants on this exclusive Curator's Tour will learn valuable information about the selection and maintenance of Camellias, Magnolias and Rhododendrons.</i></p> <p><i>Learn about these enthralling cool-climate flowering plants and experience their stunning diversity first-hand in Mount Lofty Botanic Garden's iconic gullies.</i></p>
<p>Demystifying Orchids</p> <p><u>Dates:</u> Sunday 9 September <u>Time:</u> 10am to 3pm <u>Where:</u> Mount Lofty Botanic Garden Nursery</p>	<p><i>Developing your own collection of orchids may be easier than you think. In this practical hands-on Masterclass propagating and growing orchids successfully will be demystified.</i></p> <p><i>This Masterclass will cover the scientific principles of plant growth and propagation methods, such as deflasking and plant division, and will include demonstrations of growing media and information on how to best look after your native orchids.</i></p>
<p>The Art of Bonsai: Principles and Practices</p> <p><u>Dates:</u> Sunday 14 October <u>Time:</u> 10am to 3pm <u>Where:</u> Mount Lofty Botanic Garden</p>	<p><i>Learn about the ancient art and science of Bonsai from one of the Botanic Gardens' leading horticulturists, Rob Hatcher. In this practical hands-on Masterclass you'll learn about the best horticultural practices to construct, grow and care for your very own Bonsai. You'll explore tricky Bonsai techniques such as correct watering and knowing when and how to prune and re-pot your Bonsai. At the end of the session you'll take home the Bonsai you constructed in class.</i></p>

