THE RHODODENDRON NEWSLETTER
APRIL 2011

Published by the
Australian Rhododendron Society, Victorian Branch Inc. (A5896Z)
P.O. Box 500, Brentford Square, Victoria 3131
Email: secretary@vicrhodo.org.au
Telephone: 0418 340 240
Editor: Simon Begg Ph: (03) 9751 1610
email: simonwbegg@gmail.com
ARSV Website: www.vicrhodo.org.au
Picture site http://picasaweb.google.com/ARSVic

PROGRAMME

General Meetings are held at the Municipal Horticultural Centre, Jolimont Rd, Vermont. Mel 62 G4 or the National Rhododendron Garden, The Georgian Rd, Olinda unless otherwise stated.

THE 2011 PROGRAMME : NEW FORMAT

GENERAL MEETINGS AT NUNAWADING: **3rd Friday**

- JUNE 17TH 8.00pm Andrew Rouse – Vireyas from seed & hybridizing.
- SEPTEMBER 16Th 8.00pm Speaker to be advised.
- NOVEMBER 18TH 8.00pm AGM. Speaker to be advised.

OPEN WORKSHOPS AT THE NATIONAL RHODODENDRON GARDENS; **3rd Sunday**.

- MAY 15th - 2.00pm Liliums with Mike and Inge Hammer
- OCTOBER 9TH – 2.00pm Neil Puddey from Coffs Harbour– Vireya Rhododendrons.
- OCTOBER 30TH – 2.00pm during the Rhododendron Show. Growing rhododendrons in Melbourne.

APRIL

SATURDAY 16TH VIREYA GROUP. 10.00AM. Meet at Andrew Rouse's home, 15 Airedale Ave, Hawthorn East, Ph: 9882 5893. Andrew will be distributing species and hybrids to reduce the pressure on his overfull glasshouse, including *Rh crassifolium* collected from Mt Kinabalu and *Rh viriosum* (open pollinated) from Simon.

TUESDAY 19TH FAMILY FUN DAY @ NRG. 10.00am-4.00pm. Parks Vic organises this day each year during the school holidays. Lots of activities to entertain children. Bring or buy a picnic lunch and enjoy the friendly atmosphere.

MAY

SATURDAY & SUNDAY 7TH & 8TH - BEECHMONT OPEN GARDEN. 12 Mernda Rd Olinda. All welcome. Proceeds to Monbulk Rotary Club's wheel chair project. Ph: 9751 1610.

SUNDAY 15TH LILIUM WORKSHOP 2.00PM. Rhododendron Garden – in the lunch room. Mike and Inge Hammer will illustrate the many varieties of liliums and their propagation.

JUNE

FRIDAY 17TH MEETING AT NUNAWADING 8.00PM. Speaker - Andrew Rouse – Vireyas. Bring along flowers, Rhodos & misc. for the show bench and identification.

JULY

NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL BE SENT

PRESIDENTS REPORT MARCH 2011

At Sassafras the rainfall for January was 115.5 mm, for February 246 mm and for March to date 133mm with 4 days to go. That means the rainfall over summer was 543.5 mm and for the first 3 months of this year 495 mm. These are well above average. It has also been far colder than average (despite some contrary comment I have heard from the Bureau of Meteorology). We have found it desirable to turn on our heating on quite a few days over the last 3 months (something we would normally never do over summer) whereas in previous years we were far more likely to wish we had air conditioning. This has been reflected by a summer without any burning off restrictions. Remarkable! One year hardly makes for a trend but let's hope it's a sign of a return to longer term weather trends.

Attendances at the NRG for the 9 months since July are well above 60,000. This is a massive increase on previous years where I understand the annual attendances were more like 28,000. Much of this is of course because the gardens are now free entry but I like to think that the effort we have been putting in to publicising the gardens have also made a contribution. Of course this strengthens our argument that the gardens should be declared a first tier cool climate botanical garden. On this score, we have delayed approaching the new Liberal Government firstly because they needed some time to settle into office and then because of the massive floods in northern Victoria. Our request would surely have seemed somewhat trivial in the light of this major unfolding tragedy. But, as things settle down, we hope to continue our campaign. The historical DVD that we produced of the gardens is now on sale at the NRG gift shop although sales so far have been slow. Parks still think they will sell appreciable numbers during the spring peak blooming period.

The third article on the NRG appeared in the Yarra Valley and Dandenongs Country Life magazine and covered autumn in the gardens. There is one more to go dealing with winter in the gardens.

A number of us were closely involved with the Ferny Creek Lilium and Vireya show held in January. This is a show originally initiated by the ARS, Vireyas are of course our speciality while liliums are a high profile companion plant for Rhododendrons since they like similar growing conditions and grow well in combination with Rhododendrons. The show had Japan as a theme (since that is where oriental liliums come from) and in addition to the competitive and non competitive flower show it displayed kimonos and photographs from Japan plus a display of Bonsai, some over 100 years old. There were also demonstrations of Ikebana flower arranging and visitors could participate in a traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony. Many very favourable comments were received and the weekend was a resounding success. This is a show I would urge members to attend next year.

Our barbeque on the 26th January was reasonably well attended. Unlike previous years we started the proceedings with a walk around the gardens followed by the barbeque under the Cherry trees on the lawn below the hall and sheds.

In my last report I talked about the state of our society and our plan to change our meeting profile. Instead of monthly meetings at Nunawading on Friday evenings we have moved to quarterly evening meetings but in addition quarterly meetings in the National Rhododendron Gardens on a Sunday afternoon. The first of these Sunday meetings was held in January with

Laurie Begg leading a hands on propagating session in the glass house. We had an attendance of 38 people including 3 people who had no previous association with the society (thanks to Marcia Begg's efforts in publicising the meeting in the local papers – thanks Marcia). This is far more than we have been getting to Friday evening meetings. This is of course what we were hoping for but it also raised the thought in our minds that maybe the future focus of the society should be aimed at propagating the rarer rhododendrons and offering these for sale to both members and non members. The number of commercial growers of rhododendrons is declining with a consequent loss of diversity and with the cooler weather we are seeing a significant increase in interest for these plants. Many of the people enquiring are stating that they are having great trouble finding even some of the more popular and previously readily available hybrids let alone some of the more interesting species. A problem is the man power required to look after the plants we propagate. This takes a considerable amount of work beyond the capacity of our current Tuesday working group many of whom would far rather work in the gardens than look after potted plants being grown on for sale.

Our second gardens meeting will be held on Sunday the 15th May at 2 pm and will be discussing Liliums. Note in your calendar also our Vireya meeting on Saturday the 16th April at 10 am at Andrew Rouse's place.

We also held our first Friday evening Nunawading meeting in March with an attendance of 11 people, about typical of attendances last year. We watched a film on the history of the Exbury gardens, the Rhododendron gardens created and maintained by the Rothschild family, a very interesting and enjoyable film for those who attended.

For the moment we have solved our problem of no treasurer by employing an outside book keeper with Michael Hare handling the liaison. This seems to work quite well but it is putting a very large burden on Michael in addition to his duties as secretary. We desperately need more involvement from members in running the society. Anyone prepared to help, please come forward.

If any of you reading this have any thoughts on what the society should do to increase interest and make itself more relevant, please tell us. It only takes a moment to type out an email, far less time than it has taken for you to read to this point. Please do it now. My email address is mihammer@bigpond.com

Regards
Michael Hammer

THE SPECIES COLUMN.

orbiculare -Subsection Fortunea.[Photo page 8]

This is quite an attractive species, free-flowering and with nice rounded leaves. We have had some trouble in keeping this species alive in the Garden, and 3 old plants in the centre of the Maddenia walk have gradually died over the last 5 years or so. Peter Cox in "The Larger Rhododendron Species" notes that these plants are quite hardy to severe cold, but not very heat resistant. We have no control over summer temperatures, but fortunately we have several

plants in sheltered positions which seem to be doing well.

Name:
Named after the circular or orbicular leaves.

Distribution:
Western Sichuan at 2000 – 4000 metres in woodlands, thickets and rocks.

Characteristics:
This is a compact shrub up to 3 metres high, but usually much lower in open positions. The leaves are bright green above, and pale glaucous green below. The flowers appear in trusses of 7 to 10 and are pale pink, rose, to purplish pink,with a corolla of 7 lobes and 14 stamens. The species has been placed in the Fortunea series due to its 7 lobed flowers whereas the smaller *williamsianum* has 5-lobed flowers and is placed in the Thompsonia Series.

Hybrids.
There have been at least a dozen hybrids of orbiculare raised overseas but I only know of one available here.:
Temple Belle – (*orbiculare x williamsianum*). Attractive pink flowers on a compact plant.- Three of these were planted in 1985 but I have not found them.

Where to See These Plants:
We have only 3 plants surviving from a total of 12 originally planted.. There are two near the path below the Glasshouse which flowered last year,and another in the main rockery.

Alan Kepert.

VIREYA SPECIES COLUMN

R zollingeri [photo page 8]
This species is included by Dr George Argent *Rhododendrons of subgenus Vireya,* RHS in association with Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, 2006 in Section VI *Albovireya,* a small section with 14 members spread between West Malesia [Indonesia, Malaya, including Borneo, and the Philippines] and New Guinea. Dr Argent notes that Sleumer [1966] commented that it was doubtful that *Albovireya* is a natural entity or whether it should be merged into *Euvireya.* Dr Argent goes on to say that the relationships between the species from West Malesia and those from New Guinea is not likely to be great. He suggests parallel evolution of the two groups.
R zollingeri is found in West Malesia, in common with the better known member of the Section, *R aequabile.* The species has the distinction of being widely distributed over Indonesia and the Philippines, apparently with little variation, and the further distinction of being found in Bali and Lombok, either side of the Wallace line. Unlike *R aequabile,* which is found in dense subalpine forest, *R zollingeri* is found on bare open slopes, on ridges, exposed summits, volcanic rocks or crater walls in fern grass and scrub or open forest including *Casuarina* forest and dry places. It was introduced into cultivation from Sulawesi 'recently' [as written in 2006] and, as described by Dr Argent, as a not very spectacular plant with small dull red or orange flowers. Notwithstanding this less than enthusiastic

commendation I have chosen this species for this issue partly because my initial plant, sourced from Lyn Craven [Murray McAlister and Bill Taylor also got some cuttings from Graeme Smith sourced from Keith Adams ex Sulawesi [1996]] is flowering for the first time as I write and partly because I have a better opinion of it.

Name

The species is named for the collector of the species Heinrich Zollinger [1818-1859] a Swiss botanist who made extensive collections in Java and other Indonesian islands. The species was collected on 16 June 1845.

Description [taken, largely, from Argent]

R zollingeri is a much branched, erect shrub or tree to 4m. The '4m' is yet to be seen in Olinda conditions [I don't anticipate anything like that size] but my initial plant is approaching .5m with commendable vigour. Internodes are 2-10cm. I do notice that both the initial plant, and cuttings from it, very noticeably wilt in even mildly warm weather [say 25C] despite watering but pick up readily as soon as the temperature cools. I don't envisage planting exposed to fierce 40C sun.

Leaves 4-6 together in tight pseudowhorls but commonly with an odd leaf apart from the others. Blade 30-70 x 10-22 mm, narrowly ovate to obovate or elliptic or narrowly elliptic; apex shortly acuminate, sub acute or sometimes obtuse, often apiculate with a small protruding gland; margin flat and entire, or slightly revolute when dry; base broadly to narrowly tapering; initially scaly on both sides, glabrescent above when mature, the scales leaving small pits, persistently scaly beneath. Petiole 2.5-5 x 1-1.5 mm semi-rounded, grooved above, scaly.

Flowers; a 3-8 flowered open umbel, the flowers horizontal to half hanging. Corolla 14-15 x 9 mm tubular red or orange; tube 10 x 3-6 x 3-5 mm sub densely scaly outside, glabrous inside variable shape lobes 4 x 4 mm

Verdict

As I indicated above my verdict is 'worth growing'. It has a considerable virtue of shape and, so far, is not attacked by rust when neighbours are. The flowers may be small but come in commendable number. Mine are red.

Simon Begg

VIREYA FLOWERS WANTED

Anne O'Connor, the RHS Gold-medal botanical artist whose speciality is Vireya Rhododendrons, has been approached to run a class for botanical artists in Canberra on painting these beautiful flowers. This master-class special will be held in the last week of October this year. (Anne was an exhibitor at our Conference in 2010.)

Anne needs a minimum of 20 trusses of Vireya flowers, each with at least one complete whorl of leaves attached, for that week. (They do not have to be different varieties)

Can you help?

No, obviously you don't know if you will have flowers for that week, but if you grow Vireyas and would be prepared to donate a flower or two to Anne's class if your plants look like flowering that week, then please contact Anne O'Connor. You would need to be near Melbourne or Canberra.

Ph.(03)59754713 or 0425772231 (mob) Email anneoc1@tpg.com

The best way to keep these flowers fresh for a week is on a plant in a pot. If you know the best way to transport pots to Canberra and back or, alternatively, cut flowers one way by plane, Anne would be grateful for any advice.

NRG CUTTINGS DAY ON SUNDAY 20TH FEBRUARY 2011 AT OLINDA

LAURIE BEGG AND THE ARS

***These notes were taken and prepared by Mary Hare* Ed.**

POTTING MIXES

Potting mixes must be reasonably open to allow the oxygen needed by the roots as they grow. They must also drain freely to prevent root rot.
Laurie uses a variety of materials including

- Perlite
- "Nature's Soil" Potting Mix
- Granite sand-washed (sieve) to remove fine dust or "Tynong Toppings"
- Peat Moss

On the day Laurie used a 1:1 mix of Perlite and "Nature's Soil"

ROOTING HORMONES

Suitable products are:-

- "Clonex Purple"gel for semi-hardwood cuttings like Azaleas and Rhododendrons
- "Clonex Red"gel for hardwood cuttings
- "Rootex L" liquid for either. This needs to be mixed with water-50:50 for Rhodos etc or 40:60 for softwood cuttings.

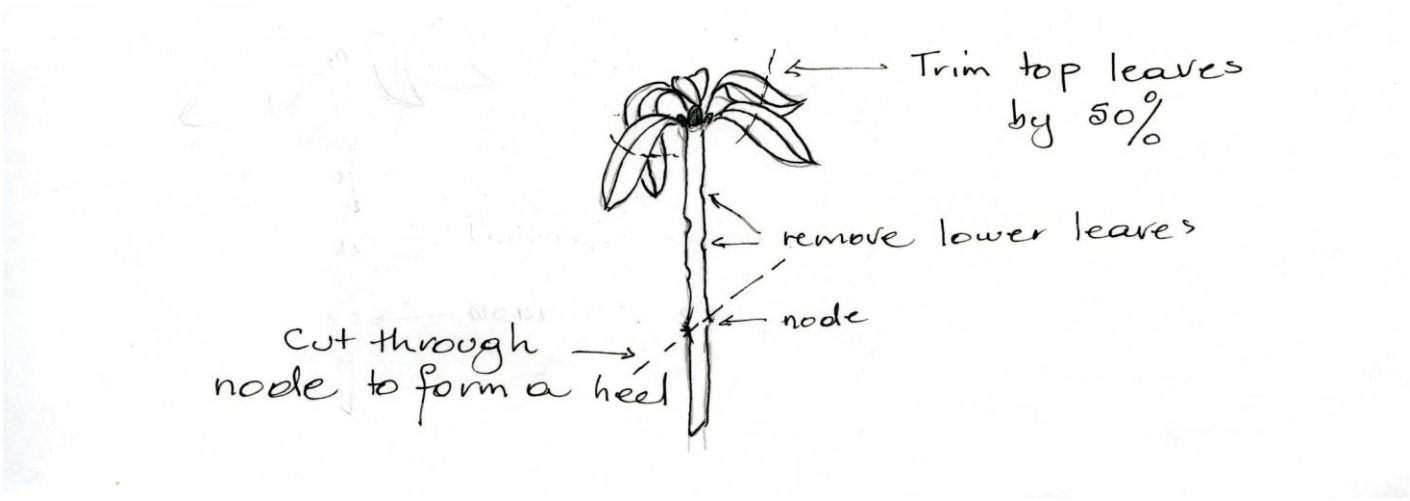
CUTTINGS

Use semi-hardwood samples which are healthy and without any infestation (eg lace bug or mites). Potential problems are having the stem too thick or being too green and not hardened enough.

EXAMPLES

1. Rhododendrons

Remove the furry indumentum and all lower leaves.
Trim large leaves at the top about 50%
Some people like to take a cutting with 2 nodes and cut through the bottom node to form a heel



2. Proteas and Waratahs

Use a piece that is green and flexible.
Remove all except the top few leaves and trim these by 50%

3. Conifers eg Japanese Umbrella Pine

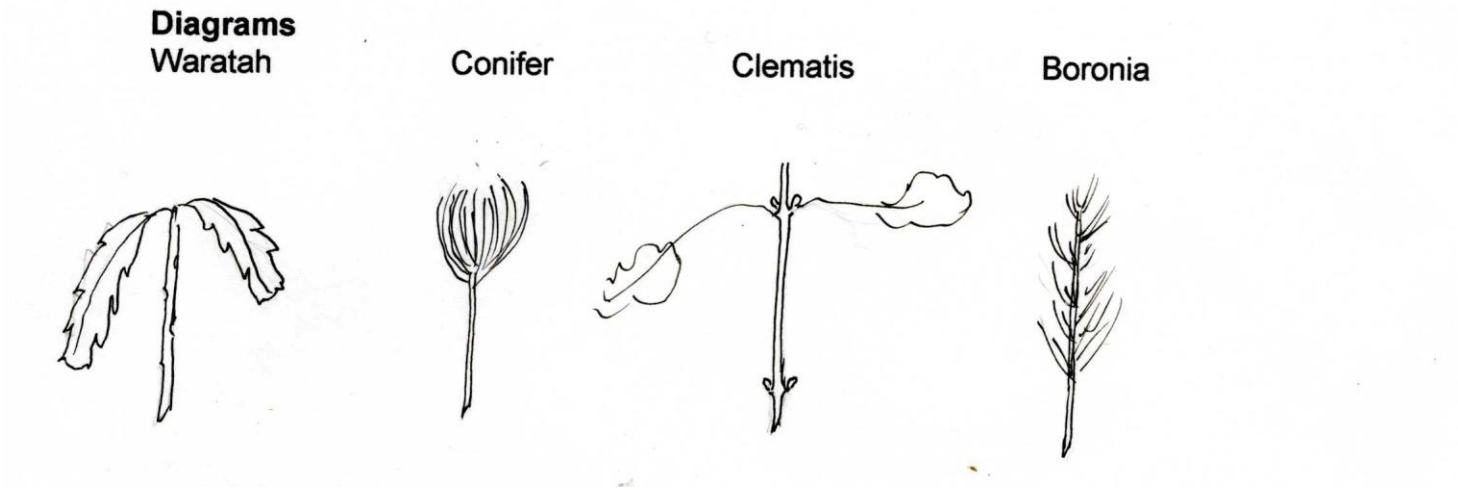
Remove lower needles but no need to trim the top needles because they do not lose much water in transpiration unlike broad leaves.

4. Clematis

Take the cutting after flowering. Cut a piece with 2 nodes and leave the top leaves. There will be buds at each node and even if the top dies the cutting may well shoot from the bottom node despite it being buried under the soil.

5. Boronia

As above



PROCEDURE

1. Prepare a suitable potting mix.
2. Prepare the cuttings.
3. Dip in Rooting hormone (and NO you won't grow roots if you spill it on yourself).
4. Using a dibber to make the hole (chopsticks are excellent) plant the cuttings spaced apart to leave room for the root growth.


R orbiculare
Alan Kepert Photo November 2010


R zollingeri
"Beechmont" March 2011

Laurie Begg demonstrating at the Propagation Workshop

ARSV stand at Tesselaars Rare Plant Expo

Lilium & Vireya Show at Fernv Creek

TWO TASMANIAN PLANTSMEN

Frances Burns Distinguished Editor of the Newsletter of the Eugene Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

Reproduced with the kind permission of Editor and author of the article. Ed.

Harry Ronken of Evandale, Tasmania, whose passion for plant science is backed up with a B.A. degree in Plant Science & Psychology, propagated rhododendrons for his small nursery business and eventually joined the American Rhododendron Society. However, with Australia's drought conditions and warming climate, rhododendrons are losing favour there. To diversify, his attention turned to terrestrial orchids which had not been of much significance in Australia. He photographed small native Tasmanian orchids for two years as a means of further study. Because they require symbiotic fungi to thrive, and many genera require specific fungi, they are not easy to grow in gardens so Harry does not grow/cultivate native terrestrials, but rather northern hemisphere cold climate terrestrials like Cypripedium, Dactylorhiza, Serapias, Pleione and Bletilla and is giving Ophrys and Orchis a whirl. Importing plant material for his floriculture shed was neither viable nor affordable due to Australia's stringent plant quarantine requirements. Plan B was to import seed.

With the help of Dick Cavender in the US, and others in England, Europe and China, he was able to obtain seed, hoping to flower seedlings within two or three years. The caveat was that orchid seed requires aseptic conditions using laboratory techniques, which meant restoring the lab he had formerly used for tissue culture. As the orchids took off, Harry tried intergenetic hybridizing of Bletilla with Pleione and found that possibly "the seed parent's ovule development is arrested prior to meisosis (halving of the diploid maternal germ cell to a haploid set of chromosomes),

and, due to a recognition that the donor pollen (Pleione) is/may be incompatible for the fertilization to complete normal diploid embryo development. Some form of parthenogenesis?" No inferences can be made until progeny is flowered, possibly next year.

Barry Davidson, a high school biology teacher, is the understudy for Harry on his project. The plants pictured on the wall are epi- and litho-phytics. He is particularly interested in the Sarcochilus and the Masdevallia, a large genus of the Pleurothallidinae, a sub tribe of the orchid family. Rather than display and cultivate them horizon-tally, Barry has opted to the for an eye catching display. Barry grows terrestrial orchids in his garden – a large, well-kept scenic delight full of rhododendrons, Japanese maples, a Dove tree (Davidia involucrata) in bloom, magnolias and many other treasures. It was a rare pleasure to walk through it with him, and to find hybrids of our own PNW native Iris innominata growing there – and in many gardens in southwest Australia!

Barry's wall of orchids.

TYPES OF FERTILISERS

Fertilizers are concentrated sources of plant nutrients, usually in the compact from such as pellets, granules, powders or liquids. They are used to obtain maximum growth rates and yield, or when plants show signs of nutrient deficiency.

FERTILISERS VERSUS SOIL CONDITIONERS

Farm yard manure and compost are not fertilizers but conditioners. These bulky natural materials contain much lower levels of nutrients but are good for soil structure and fertility. They help soil form a healthy crumb structure by helping it to hold pockets of air and water between the crumbs. Fertilizers by contrast have little effect on soil structure. If you have healthy plants and soil it is not vital to use fertilisers, but using them may produce a showier display of blooms or higher yields from edible crops.

INORGANIC VERSUS ORGANIC FERTILISERS

Inorganic fertilisers are synthetic products or mined minerals. They are usually more concentrated and faster acting than organic, which by contrast are derived from plant and animal sources. 'Straight' fertilisers contain only one or mainly one nutrient, and are usually inorganic, while 'compound' fertilisers contain a mixture of different nutrients and may be organic or inorganic.

EXAMPLES OF INORGANIC FERTILISERS

Products such as – superphosphate, Phostrogen, lime, dolomite, ammonium nitrate, etc.

EXAMPLES OF ORGANIC FERTILISERS

Seaweed, blood and bone, fish emulsion, poultry and animal manures, liquid comfrey, etc.

APPLYING FERTILISERS

Topdressing: apply to the soil surface to stimulate growth, usually in spring.
Base dressing: incorporate into the soil or potting mix prior to sowing or planting.

WATER-ON LIQUID OR SOLUBLE FERTILISERS

Concentrated liquid or crystalline fertilisers that are diluted and watered onto the roots during the growing season giving the plants and 'instant' boost. They are mainly used for glasshouse plants, pot plants and bedding displays.

FOLIAR FEED

This is the application of a dilute fertiliser solution to the leaves of plants, useful as an emergency treatment for correcting nutrient deficiencies, boosting leafy crops in the vegetable garden or for providing quick supplementary feeding.

CONTROLLED-RELEASE FERTILISERS

Inorganic fertilisers specially coated to release their nutrients gradually, these fertilisers supply a regular supply of nutrients for up to eighteen months. Granular forms can be added to potting mixes, while cartridge forms can be pushed into the compost of potted plants.
Reproduced from 'The Garden' magazine RHS, November 2008.

SIR JOSEPH DALTON HOOKER ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH

Reproduced from the Newsletter of the Eugene Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society by kind permission of its Editor and the author of this article, Frances Burns. Ed.

Doing "a little something" on J. D. Hooker turned out to be like filling a large bathtub with cold water and bathing a tom cat! Somehow he had been in the back of my mind as a "biggie" in rhododendron history, but the full impact hadn't hit the thalamus yet. Puttering on the web produced huge amounts of information all tied in copyrights. After hours of absorbing the interesting but voluminous information on one of the world's great botanists – a "lumper" not a "splitter" in the realm of plant identification – who lived to contribute to the age 94 and travelled the high seas in the 19th century directing his teams of plant observers here, there and everywhere from the Antarctic, Tasmania, Sikkim, India and beyond – and because I would surely leave a "somewhere" unaccounted for, I shall stop there. A pared down version of his life story totalled a mere four pages of small print. No way would it work in a newsletter. There's lots to learn about a fascinating, often controversial man, who was a good friend of the ever controversial Darwin – birds of a feather? So I will hit a few high spots, and leave you with a web site or two to do your own explorations on Hooker.

Frances Burns

Born July 6, 1817 in Halesworth, Suffolk, England, Hooker was the son of another famous botanist soon to be director of Kew Botanical Gardens. Hooker died at the age of 94 on 1911-12-10 in Sunningdale, Berkshire, England.
Between those "book ends" a spectacular career developed, not least of which to our group is the 30 rhododendrons or more introduced by Hooker after his 1848-1850 Expedition to Sikkim – for which we are most grateful!

Dr. Hooker, with a British grant for a trip to central and eastern Himalaya, and accompanied by British government agent, Dr. Archibald Campbell, set sail for small impoverished Sikkim, where they made history in 1849 in a country that heretofore lacked much history. Unannounced and unauthorized, they embarked on a well equipped jaunt into the mountains of Sikkim where they were soon detained by the ruling Chogyal. The British in turn sought to punish his authority with an expedition against Sikkim that eventually led to the annexation of the Darjeeling district and Morang in 1861.

Sikkim was pretty well surrounded by Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, and British India. The latter's Rajah was cautious about ticking off any of his neighbours. He and the Dewan, his chief minister, were very wary of travellers who surveyed and made maps during their travels, for good reason. (Hooker's maps later had both economic and military value to the British.) When Hooker first sought permission to enter Sikkim, the Dewan went to considerable pains to stop him in his tracks, continuing his efforts even after pressure from the British government forced the Dewan to back down. In particular, he warned them not to cross the border into Tibet. Hooker and Campbell, of course, paid no heed to his admonishment. Their border violation was used as due cause for the Dewan to arrest and toss them in prison in November 1849. Immediately (or as immediate as things were in those days) the British government threatened to invade Sikkim; ergo their release came within weeks. The old Rajah was chastised somewhat excessively with loss of his British pension

and the annexation of some of his territory. The importance of Hooker's work is made clear in that he obtained a government grant for the trip and free passage on the ship taking Lord Dalhousie, the newly-appointed Governor General, to India. (Just another tangled tangent of history with many ramifications you may want to explore!)

Once out of the gaol, Hooker travelled to Eastern Bengal in 1850, returning to England in 1851. And there we shall leave him for now. In his lifetime, he was awarded a 10-page listing of prestigious awards and honorariums; he also produced publications that take 20-pages to list. Hooker collected about 7,000 species in India and Nepal and on his return to England, managed to secure another government grant while he classified and named them. This is the tip of the iceberg on this biography. The first publication was the Rhododendrons of the Sikkim-Himalaya (1849–51), edited by his father and illustrated by Walter Hood Fitch, whose fine drawings enriched many of both Hookers' publications. Hooker's and Campbell's travel added 25 new rhododendron species to the 50 already known and the stunning new species are now illustrious plants in species collections, widely-grown and used for hybridizing. Showy and impressive species such as *thomsonii, arboreum, niveum, maddenii, edgeworthii, falconeri, hodgsonii, griffithianum, campanulatum, barbatum* and *cinnabarinum*. And let us not forget that somewhere along the way he discovered *triflorum.* Thus began a rhododendron craze in Britain and the publishing of Hooker's Himalayan Journals (1854) – dedicated to Darwin. (If you are approaching boredom on Sir James Dalton Hooker, try Googling Dame Nellie Melba. It is doubtful they ever met, but wouldn't it have been a great story?)

On the home front, Hooker was close to his seven children and enjoyed playing with them. Dr. Charles Darwin attended their births; Hooker followed Darwin's suggestion that he also attend their births and anesthetized his wife with chloroform during labour – a course of action, by mutual agreement, they found as to be as calming for both men as for the mother. On that tranquil cliff-hanger, we leave Dr. Hooker to his further, often controversial, adventures.

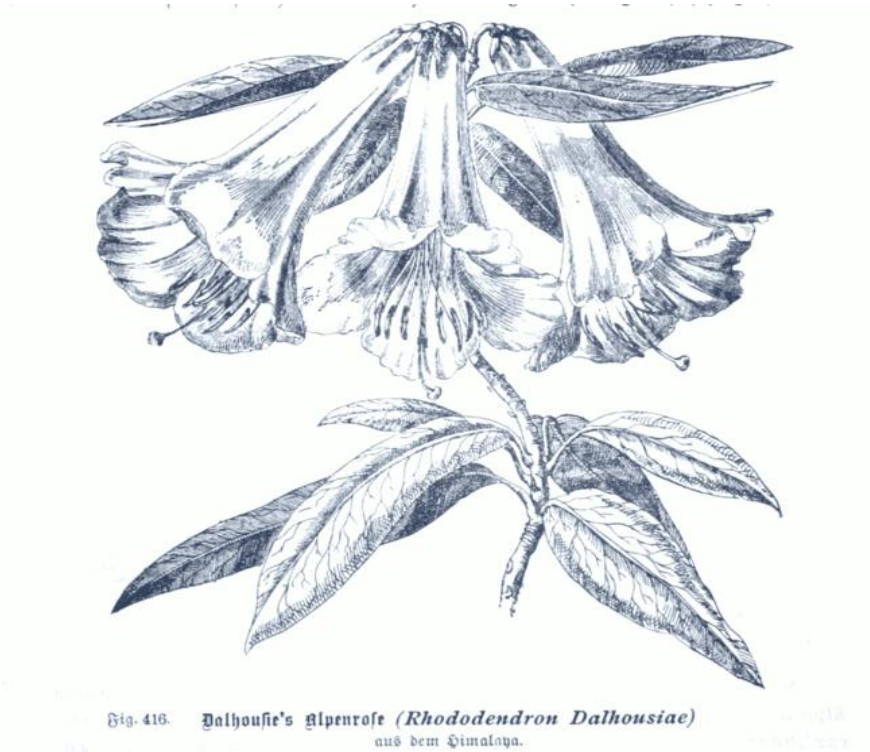


Fig. 416. Dalhousie's Alpenrose *(Rhododendron Dalhousiae)* aus dem Himalaya.

The following web sites are helpful:
Wikipedia, rhodygarden.org and www.jdhooker.org.uk/biography1.htm

NEWS

From 'The Garden' magazine December 2010

'New discoveries of sudden oak death (*Phytophthera ramorum*) in larch plantations in Wales and Northern Ireland suggest that the disease is more widespread than first thought.
Japanese larch trees which have now been felled were infected with the fungus-like pathogen. Other species and cultivars have not yet shown any infection. The pathogen produces spore on the trees which could spread easily by wind and water. Until 2009 the disease was largely confined to naturalised *Rhododendron ponticum* but testing now shows it is more widespread. 2,600 hectares have now been cleared to try to control the disease.
Symptons include die-back on new tips, resinous bleeds on branches and stems, excessive side shoots and increased cone production.

DID YOU KNOW?

Many of our Victorian orchids have evolved complex techniques for attracting pollinators as most do not have a nectar reward. The Donkey Orchids trick native bees by mimicking the surrounding yellow and brown pea flowers using the ultraviolet colour range in which bees eyes see. Some Spider and Bird Orchids emit a perfume which is the same as a female wasp. When the male wasp lands on the labellum the pollen is collected on the head and thus transferred to another flower.

THE 2011 PROGRAMME : NEW FORMAT

NB The Rhododendron Newsletter will be produced quarterly this year. Issues will be sent out by email or post in January, April, July & October. Contributions would be greatly appreciated.
Committee meetings will be held at 5.00pm before General Meetings & as necessary.

APRIL – Newsletter

SATURDAY 16th -10am Vireya Group at Andrew Rouse's House

MAY

SUNDAY 15th - 2.00pm National Rhododendron Garden Liliums with Mike and Inge Hammer.

JUNE

FRIDAY 17TH 8.00pm General Meeting at Nunawading. Andrew Rouse "Vireyas from seed and Hybridising".

JULY - Newsletter

SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY 16Th 8.00pm General Meeting at Nunawading. Speaker to be advised.

OCTOBER - Newsletter

SUNDAY 9TH – 2.00pm National Rhododendron Garden Neil Puddey from Coffs Harbour

SATURDAY 29TH-TUESDAY 1ST NOVEMBER - RHODODENDRON SHOW.

SUNDAY 30TH – 2.00pm National Rhododendron Garden during the Rhododendron Show. Growing rhododendrons in Melbourne.

NOVEMBER FRIDAY 18TH 8.00pm AGM and General Meeting at Nunawading. Speaker to be advised

DECEMBER

SUNDAY 11TH is a tentative date for the Society Christmas lunch.

CONTENTS

ARSV COMMITTEE 2011

There are many vacancies on the committee. The vacancies, it seems, increase with every issue! New committee members with enthusiasm and new ideas are desperately needed.

PRESIDENT: Michael Hammer Ph: 9755 2176
VICE PRESIDENT No 1: Vacant VICE PRESIDENT No 2: Vacant
TREASURER: Vacant SECRETARY: Michael Hare, 9844 2232
Simon Begg (Editor) & Marcia Begg, Ph: 9751 1610
Inge Hammer, Ph: 9755 2176 Valerie Marshall, Ph: 9803 4434
Alan Walker, Ph: 9726 8836 Elizabeth Xipell, Ph: 9859 9934

SOCIETY PICASAWEB SITE

Visit http://picasaweb.google.com/ARSVic for the latest pictures.
Arising from the 2010 conference there are many new pictures:
* of the conference
* of NRG
* of each of the gardens and venues
* of delegates
For the "Beechmont" Picasaweb site visit http://picasaweb.google.com/simonwbegg