



# Rhododendrons South Australia

Australian Rhododendron Society Inc. South Australian Branch

Issue 142 - May 2021

## President's Musings

The internet is sometimes a wonderful tool, an excusable way to waste time and also something that often reveals unlooked for information. Recently, while searching for images of the rhododendron Helene Berndt, of which I have a cutting, I came across this site 'MLBG Ch 9 Appendix final 2006 Adelaide Botanic Gardens'. My excuse to 'waste time'. I had to investigate.

What I found was a report about the MLBG from 1963 relating Dr Noel Lothian's objectives for the Garden which was to cultivate species and subspecies of exotics, the first plantings being ferns and rhododendrons. In this report there followed a list of rhododendron plants at the MLBG, Pirianda Garden, Melbourne Botanic Garden, Dandenong Ranges Botanic Garden (Olinda), Mt Tomah and the National Botanic Garden. Of the listed gardens, Pirianda, the former home and garden of Harvey and Gillian Ansell, is now managed by Parks Victoria; parts of Mt Tomah, in the Blue Mountains, was affected by the 2020 bushfires. Since 1963 the MLBG has also suffered the destruction of fire.

Rhododendrons were listed for all gardens with the DRBG having the largest number of plants followed closely by the MLBG. Pirianda and Mt Tomah had quite a few less than SA and the other two gardens fairly negligible. Unfortunately the report and list was far too long to print being over fifteen pages long. What struck me from reading this information was how important the SA collections of plants are and that we need to value them more highly. I now look differently at the Whibley collection and those older rhododendrons saved from the freeway construction. Their importance in the State's social gardening history is important as are our attempts to propagate them. They were originally cultivated to cope with our climate so are hardy and therefore good to pass on to new rhododendron gardeners.

Those of you who could not attend April's meeting missed an entertaining and informative talk where Shinya Ueda discussed and demonstrated pruning techniques. Before you grab your pruning implements remember Shinya's advice. "Before you start, look at the plant. Decide what you want the plant to look like after you have pruned. Then prune."

Our next speaker will take us into the world of weeds. Let's hope we come out unscathed.

See you all at the next meeting.

*Olivera*

## Visit to Raywood Nursery at Deep Creek

Twenty two enthusiastic members attended the gathering at the Raywood Nursery on a perfect Autumn day. Many, who had not been to Raywood previously enjoyed wandering in the lovely setting and sorting through the wide range of plants on offer. Our thanks go to Quentin & Jenny Woolaston and their son, Lucas and daughter Rose who answered many enquiries and assisted with purchases.



A lovely woodland setting for the Raywood nursery

Buying up the goodies



Quentin Woolaston –enjoying the day

## Last Meeting



Shinya Ueda's talk and pruning demonstration

Raffle winner – Belinda Cullum with Rh. Grace Seabrook



## Next Meeting

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This will be held at the RSL Hall, Stirling, on **Tuesday, May 18th at 7.30pm**. Please note the earlier starting time agreed to at the April meeting. Our guest speaker will be Chris Brodie, Weeds Botanist, State Herbarium of South Australia.

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*Please remember to bring something for the “pot Luck Stall”. Friends and new members are always welcome.*

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## Bloom of the Month – Vireya Charming Valentino

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## From the Propagating bench *by Richard Illman*

Have you considered raising a new Rhododendron from seed rather than using cuttings?

If you look carefully in your own garden you may find that nature has set some seed for you. The seed capsules should be nearing maturity and when they turn brown and possibly start to open at the end they should be collected and put into a container where they can open fully and

discharge their seed. If you don't have seed but would still like to try we should have a supply of Vireya seed for members in the next few weeks. All you need is a warm box and some patience!

Interested members can speak to Richard who will provide instruction on how to sow and raise the seed.

This is the most popular way of producing new hybrid rhododendrons and is a common method employed overseas.

## Useful resource

If you have not come across Marc Colombel's Rhododendron site <http://www.rhodophiles.com/> it is definitely worth checking. Marc has been developing this site with 'all about rhododendrons' practical knowledge and it is promising to be a wonderful resource.

When you have some time look at this site and use 'fast navigation' to explore the files on how to do things and some of the pictures.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "rhodophiles.com". The page has a yellow background. On the left, there is a photograph of a large, bushy pink rhododendron in front of a stone building. Above the photo is the caption "Hundreds-year-old Rhododendron Broughtoni". To the right of the photo, the word "RHODODENDRON" is written in large, bold, green capital letters. Below this, a text box contains the following information:

**The goal of this web site is to propagate knowledge about Rhododendrons.**

Rhododendron comes from the Greek : rhodos, "rose" and dendron, "tree".  
It was the naturalist Carl von Linné who gave the name RHODODENDRON.  
Today the genus RHODODENDRON group together about 1000 species and the number of hybrids of rhododendrons is estimated at more than 25.500.  
On this web site you will find all kinds of information about rhododendrons, a gallery of hybridizers of rhododendrons and hundreds of rhododendron pictures.  
Also files about the diseases of the rhododendron, the multiplication of the rhododendron by sowing, cutting or grafting etc.

# What's blooming this month









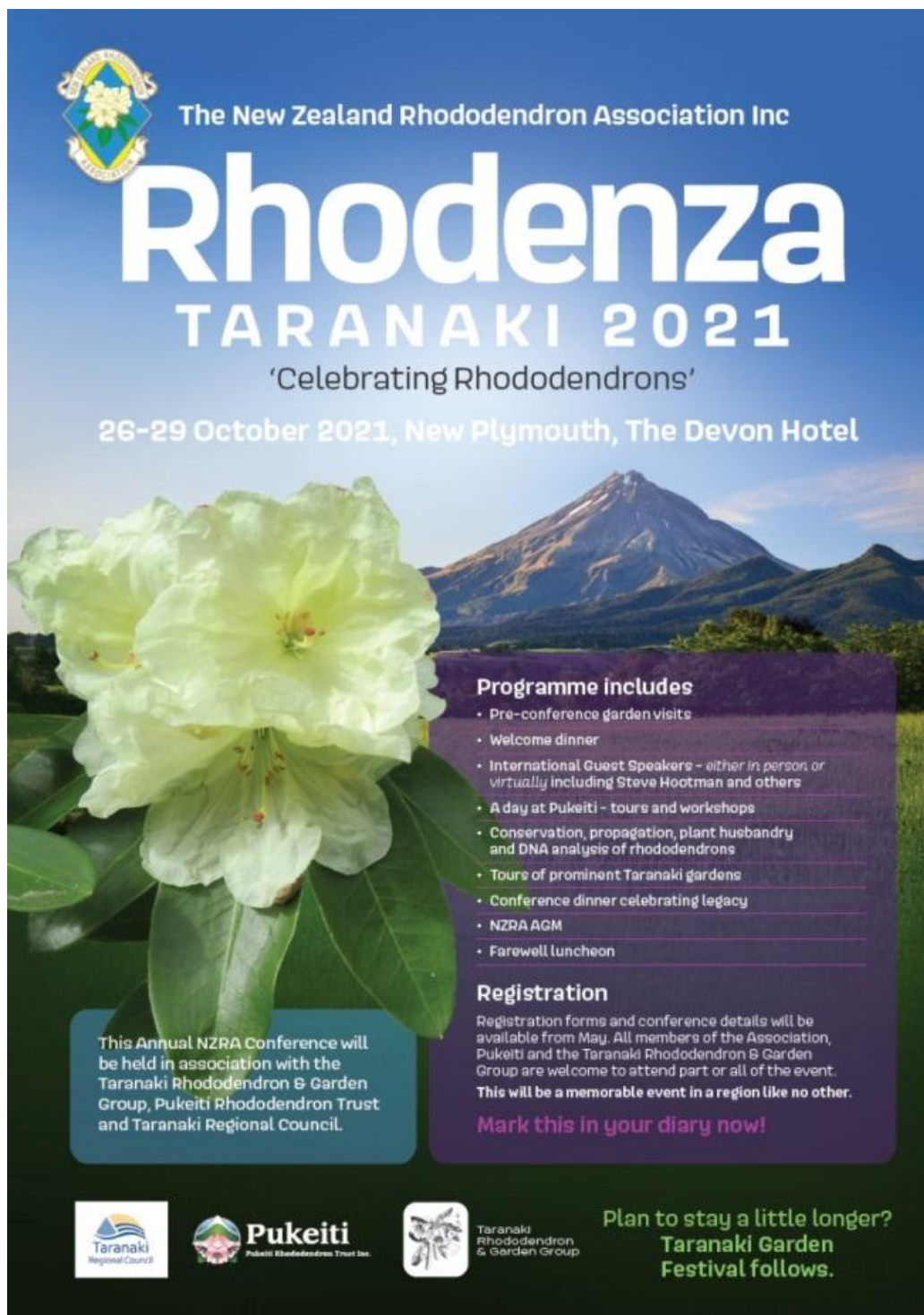


## Notice Board


### REMINDER – Collection of The Rhododendron Journal

Printed copies of The Rhododendron Journal are ready for collection by members who ordered them. Email reminders have been sent to those members. Please contact Sue Beckoff to organise your copy collection.

### 2021 Conference – New Zealand



The poster features a large, vibrant yellow rhododendron flower in the foreground on the left. In the background, a scenic view of a mountain range under a blue sky is visible. The text is arranged in a clear, hierarchical manner, starting with the association's name and logo, followed by the event title and dates. A central purple box contains the program details and registration information. At the bottom, logos for the Taranaki Regional Council, Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust Inc., and the Taranaki Rhododendron & Garden Group are displayed, along with a promotional message for a garden festival.

 The New Zealand Rhododendron Association Inc

# Rhodenza

## TARANAKI 2021

'Celebrating Rhododendrons'

26-29 October 2021, New Plymouth, The Devon Hotel

### Programme includes




- Pre-conference garden visits
- Welcome dinner
- International Guest Speakers - either in person or virtually including Steve Hootman and others
- A day at Pukeiti - tours and workshops
- Conservation, propagation, plant husbandry and DNA analysis of rhododendrons
- Tours of prominent Taranaki gardens
- Conference dinner celebrating legacy
- NZRA AGM
- Farewell luncheon

### Registration

Registration forms and conference details will be available from May. All members of the Association, Pukeiti and the Taranaki Rhododendron & Garden Group are welcome to attend part or all of the event. **This will be a memorable event in a region like no other.**

**Mark this in your diary now!**

This Annual NZRA Conference will be held in association with the Taranaki Rhododendron & Garden Group, Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust and Taranaki Regional Council.

   Taranaki Rhododendron & Garden Group

Plan to stay a little longer?  
Taranaki Garden Festival follows.

