

MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON NEWS AND NOTES

A Publication of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American
Rhododendron Society

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February 2014

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

May 2-4, 2014	MAC at Days Hotel and Flatwoods Conference Center, Flatwoods, WV
May 16-18, 2014	ARS Convention, Cleveland, Ohio
April 20-24, 2016	ARS Convention, Williamsburg, Virginia

Rhododendron Web Site Addresses:

American Rhododendron Society	http://www.rhododendron.org/
ARS Store Order from Amazon thru this site	http://arsstore.org/
MAC Website (UPDATED REGULARLY)	http://www.macars.org/
U VA Science & Engineering Libraries	http://www.lib.virginia.edu/science/guides/s-rhodo.htm
UVA Special Collections	http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/
Old Quarterly Bulletins & JARS	http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/
Rhododendron Blog	www.rhododendron.org/blog/
Friends of the National Arboretum	http://savetheazaleas.org/
FONA's Save the Azaleas and Boxwood site	ornamental selections and located off Interstate 64 at Pipestem, WV.

MAC SPRING MEETING, May 2-4, 2014, Flatwoods West Virginia by Doug Jolley

Flatwoods, West Virginia will be the site for the upcoming MAC Spring Meeting. The meeting site will be the Days Hotel Flatwoods:

<http://www.flatwoods.com/days-hotel.aspx>

Flatwoods is situated at the geographic center of the state and is at exit 67 off Interstate 79.

Friday activities will include the flower show set-up, the MAC Chapter Meeting, and the Plants for Member sale. The evening speaker will be Charles Garrett from Warm Springs, VA. Charles is retired from the Virginia Tech Extension Service and is a freelance photographer and writer. He is well known in western Virginia and the Greenbrier region of West Virginia for his nature outings, photography and writings. Charles will share a photographic overview of the High Mountain Border of the Two Virginias. Charles' work can be viewed at www.grayowl.com.

Prior to the Saturday garden tours, Norman Cole, owner of Cole Nurseries, will give a short presentation on the patent process for plants. Cole Nurseries will be releasing a newly patented boxwood cultivar in 2014 and some of those plants will be available at the meeting. Cole Nurseries is one of the premier nurseries in WV for choice

Both gardens to be visited are just minutes from the hotel. A private garden which is composed of ornamental, herb and vegetable areas will be visited in the morning. Lunch will be at a locally historic location along the Little Kanawha River at Falls Mill on Burnsville Lake. After lunch, the garden of Doug and Davetta will be visited. This garden features native azaleas, rhododendrons and more. Many plants growing there are from 30 years of bringing back table favors, Plants for Member (P4M) plants and cuttings from the MAC region. Some of Harry Wise's selections are growing in the garden as well. Additionally, vegetable gardens, herb gardens and native azalea propagation areas round out the grounds.

The late afternoon will conclude with the social hour and auction. Once again, Dr. Jay Gillenwater will be furnishing P4M plants: a terrific selection of native azaleas, rhododendrons and other azalea varieties. The auction will be the pre-banquet highlight and all attendees are encouraged to bring an auction plant. After dinner, Doug Jolley will take the group on a photographic tour of West Virginia as he speaks about "Searching for Azaleas and Rhododendrons Wild and Tame in West Virginia." He will show prime azalea and rhododendron

habitats and locations as well as some of his own hybrids and past hybridizing efforts by Harry Wise.

A hospitality room is also available for Friday and Saturday evening for further socializing.

More plans are in the works for the weekend and detailed meeting packets will be mailed in the near future. Photos can be viewed on the chapter website as well. An adventure to the western frontier of MAC awaits May 2, 3 and 4 !!

PURCHASE AT AMAZON THROUGH ARSSTORE.ORG WEBSITE UPDATE

Steve Henning reports that ARS earned \$43.99 on the sale of 19 items valued at \$999.38 in the month of January. Books are a very popular item and two digital projectors were sold through the portal. **Try to remember to enter the Amazon website through ARSStore.org** (See list at top of this newsletter) and help ARS.

WINDBEAM WAY WANDERINGS, FEBRUARY 2014 by Doug Jolley

Early in February, a local television station reported that January had been the coldest January on record since 1978. Testimony to that statement has been the most extensive deer and rabbit damage in the garden in recent memory as well. With temperatures dipping to and



Doug Jolley



Robin and holly berries. Photo by Doug Jolley.

below zero degrees on multiple occasions, our deer

population has become aggressive in breaching protective fencing. Even with the use of additional harvest permits, we still have deer running amok.

The prolific crop of holly berries mentioned by me in the last newsletter has served early returning and resident robins well. On numerous occasions this winter, holly trees have been descended upon by hungry birds. The crop of berries has been so extensive that berries remain at the time of this writing. Holly trees should be popping up all over the state this year.

The marginally hardy rhododendrons which have been enjoying recent mild winters have been put to the test this winter. In a few months we will know for sure which survived. At any rate, nothing has broken dormancy too soon this winter !

IN THE CROZET GARDEN by Lloyd Willis

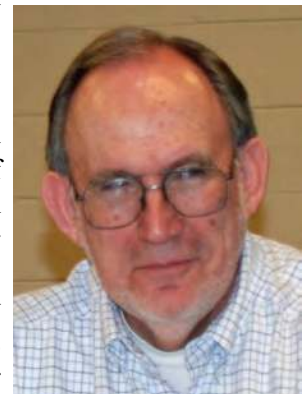
For most of the past two months it seems as if getting much done in the garden has been quite difficult with the ground frozen most of that time. So what little that could be done you could guess. Picking up twigs and cutting dead limbs out of trees and shrubs has been most of the work except for mulching.

Mulching has been a joy because the mulching is almost like the non-winter part of the year. Before the mulching can start I need to

take a pick axe to break through the first four to six inches of the top frozen part of the mulch pile. After putting the frozen chunks of mulch to the side the loading of the non-frozen mulch can start.

Usually the day after the mulching the mulch is three to four inches deep around the trees, boxwoods, and rhodos and frozen again so that it would again need a pick axe to move. It has been enjoyable getting a head start on the spring mulching in the garden.

It started raining last night about 1:00am and at 8:00am it was still raining. The ground looks still frozen in places and other places look like it is no longer frozen. Why do I mention this? Because right now is an excellent time for down hill water skiing in our garden. In several places on the morning walk I



Lloyd Willis

was skiing downhill in my work boots. It was not part of the plan, and it was almost as fun as winter mulching.

Mrs. Willis remains patient with my winter mulching and garden water skiing.

MAC MEMBERS IN THE NEWS:

On December 22, 2013, the *Daily Press* in Newport News had a short article by Kathy Van Mullecom in "Gifts for Gardeners" about **Walter Przypek's** hardy orange tree which he received as a seedling from a man in Poquoson many years ago. The tree lives outdoors and is now 10 to 12 feet tall and produces good-tasting, medium-sized oranges that ripen in mid-November. It has been bearing fruit for quite a few years. Walter was recommending a few special citrus plants for gifts.

Dave and Sharon Horn's names were in several papers in an article about fracking, "Furor over fracking in Va. forest". The article was in the *Daily Press* on January 26, the *Times-Dispatch*, the *LA Times*, and several other papers. The *LA Times* link is: <http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-national-fore-st-fracking-20140123,0,987706.story>

The article is by Neela Banerjee of Tribune Newspapers.

About 4 million people depend on the headwaters of the Potomac River for their water supply. There is widespread opposition to fracking in the George Washington Forest in this area. Dave and Sharon Horn have 650 acres, half of it wooded, that merges into the George Washington Forest. They raise beef cattle on the unforested part. Dave's family has lived by the forest for generations. They don't want the land and water disturbed.

Doug Jolley has another article in the magazine *Wonderful West Virginia*, "Discovering Horsetails", which includes several of Doug's great photos. Archives can be searched here: <http://www.wvdnr.gov/wwvmagazine/magazinesubjectform.shtml>

Doug Jolley's photos were also featured in the "Bluebirds for Rosies" project at www.thanksplainandsimple.org. This is about efforts to save bluebirds by installing nest boxes in your community.

JMU ARBORETUM WORKDAY

Sharon Collins has scheduled a workday at JMU for Monday, March 17th starting at 9:00am. Bring

tools (shovels, rakes, pruners, etc.) Phone Sharon at 540-350-2666 or email oldturnpikefarm@gmail.com

DOUG JOLLEY SHARES HIS JANUARY 5, 2014, NOTE ABOUT BETTY WISE

Hi Doug and Davetta,

Just a note to let you know that Mom's still doing good. She'll be 96 at the end of February. We still have someone that stays with her in a two bedroom apartment at the Retirement Home.

Dad's rhodos and azaleas are gorgeous in our yard. I have a plaque that says "Harry Wise the Liberator" stationed amongst his plants. I miss him every day with wonderful memories. Love to you, Nancy

DEATHS

Former longtime MAC member Ted Scott (Theodore Gourdin Scott, Jr.) was born May 7, 1919, in Orange County, VA, and died May 19, 2013, in Charlottesville, VA. He had been living at Sunnyside in Harrisonburg. Ted and his wife Carolyn attended many MAC meetings up until their household downsizing and move to Sunnyside in Harrisonburg from Orange, VA. Ted came to a few of the early MAC Species Study Group meetings, having had a strong interest in native plants.



Ted Scott.

He worked with the Virginia Native Plant Society (VNPS), including getting legislation passed in Virginia to prohibit the sale of purple loosestrife by getting it listed as a noxious weed. Ted enjoyed trips to visit the Canadian flora at the Bruce Peninsula on the Niagara Escarpment. He knew a lot about propagating plants and led a workshop for VNPS in that subject. There is a white oak, *Quercus alba*, at the Virginia State Arboretum in Boyce that was planted in 2000 to honor Ted and his years of work conserving native plant habitats. Several MAC members have fond memories of Ted, special conversations about plants with Don Hyatt and Bill Bedwell, hikes in the back country with Paul James, conversations about what he was growing at his place in Orange with me and then when Ted downsized, he



Carolyn and Ted Scott. photo courtesy of Bill Bedwell

gave me his four volume set of the *Flora of West Virginia* by Stausbaugh and Core.

Ted served in France, Luxemburg, Belgium and Germany with the 10th Armored Division in WWII. He had a degree in metallurgical engineering and worked for Cleveland Twist Drill Co. He joined the Massachusetts Audubon Society as director of program operations.

His wife Carolyn, four children, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren survive him.

MAC NON-RENEWALS AS OF 2-21-2014

Glenn Davis, Todd Dickinson & Robert Atkins, Ray Doggett, Benjamin Dukes, Joseph Dunkin, Steven Mace, Chris Wetmore. If your name is on this list, we would love to have you back. (Contact Membership Chairman Jeanne Hammer whose address is on the back of this newsletter.)

BOOK REVIEW: *STAND UP THAT MOUNTAIN*

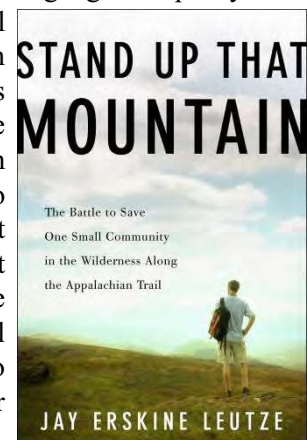
This book by Jay Erskine Leutz is a real page-turner and non-fiction thriller. It tells the story of one small community in the wilderness near the Appalachian Trail in western North Carolina fighting against a stone company that wants to tear down a mountain and turn it into gravel. It chronicles four years of legal battles by the author,

a few very colorful mountain people, some environmentalists, distinguished lawyers from Raleigh and various government agencies and employees.

The characters are well-portrayed, both the heroes and villains.

The location is one of the most beautiful places in the Southern Appalachians and rates right up there for the whole U.S. Some MAC members, especially our Species Study Group, will be familiar with the area. It is near Roan and Grassy Ridge. Big Hump, Little Hump and Yellow Mountain figure in the story. Belview Mountain is the one that was on the way to becoming a gravel quarry.

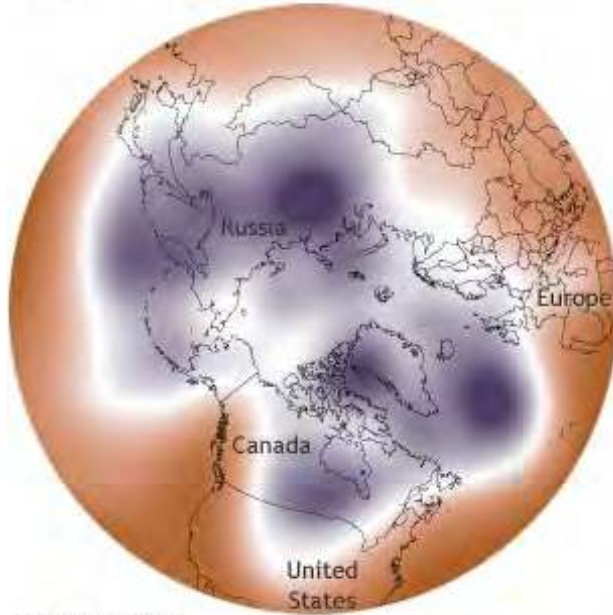
The book is very well written and flows so much like a good novel that it is hard to believe it is a true story. George McLellan recommended the book to me. It is one of the best books I have read in recent years. It is available through our new portal ARSSStore.org that goes to Amazon, or at your preferred bookstore. S. McD.



POLAR VORTEX THIS WINTER

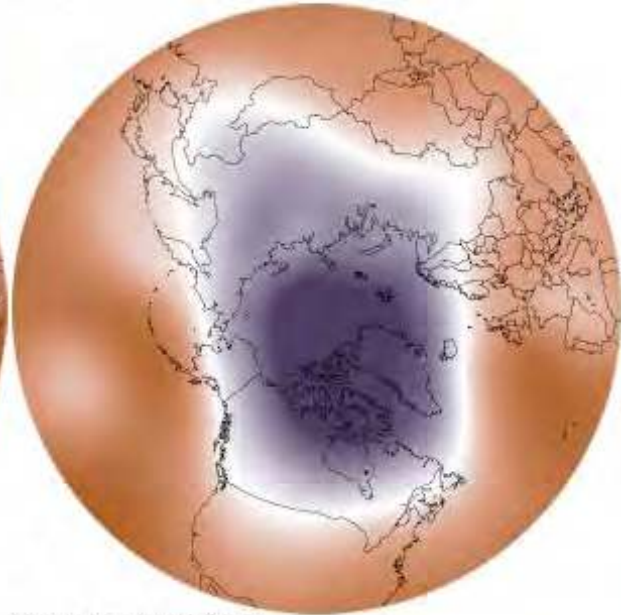
There have been extreme changes in the weather this winter in the U.S., the U.K. and elsewhere, from frequent and heavy snowstorms and cold temperatures in the eastern U.S. to a record drought in California, to excessive rainfall and flooding in the U.K. and less than average snowfall in Sochi, Russia. Changes in the polar vortex location is thought to be the cause. The polar vortex is a circulation of strong, upper-level winds that normally circle the northern pole circulating in a counterclockwise direction -- a polar low-pressure system. These winds tend to keep the bitter cold air locked in the Arctic regions of the

Wavy polar vortex configuration



January 5, 2014

More typical, compact configuration



November 14-16, 2013

500-mb geopotential height (meters)

5000

5900

Image from NOAA's climate.gov website. Wobbly polar vortex triggers extreme cold air outbreak. January 8, 2014

Northern Hemisphere. This winter that circulation has been distorted.

According to Brandon Miller, CNN's senior meteorologist, "the upper-level winds that make up the polar vortex change in intensity from time to time. When those winds decrease significantly, it can allow the vortex to become distorted, and the result is a jet stream that plunges deep into southern latitudes, bringing the cold, dense Arctic air spilling down with it. This oscillation is known as the Arctic Oscillation and it can switch from a positive phase to negative phase a few times per year. This oscillation -- namely the negative phase where the polar winds are weaker -- tends to lead to major cold air outbreaks in one or more regions of the planet."

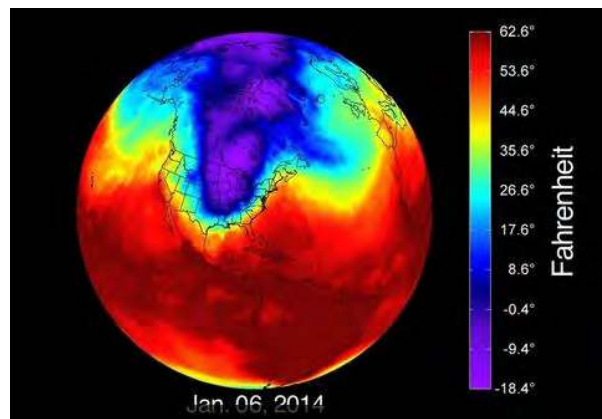
The basic cause of this is a hotly researched topic. It seem counter intuitive to have this extreme cold and global warming,, but some research shows that it could be connected. Different types of extreme weather can result from the overall warming of the planet, melting of the Arctic Sea ice. This includes extreme distortions of the jet stream, which can cause heat waves in summer and cold snaps in winter.

Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Dr. John Holdren explains the polar vortex in a 2 minute video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eDTzV6a9F4> —telling why we are more likely to have more extreme weather going forward.

In the video, Holdren explained that as the planet continues to warm, and the temperature difference between the Arctic and lower latitudes shrinks, the "polar vortex" of cold air that swirls around the far north will instead become "wavier," dipping further south and carrying extreme cold with it.

With the Arctic warming faster than the mid latitudes, the differential changes and the weakening



"The jet stream buckled in January, allowing extremely cold air (in blue) to enter the U.S." Image NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. To see image in color go our MAC newsletter on the web.

makes it more likely for the polar vortex to drop down.

January Global Temperature Fourth Highest on Record from <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/>

“According to NOAA scientists, the globally-averaged temperature over land and ocean surfaces for January 2014 was the highest since 2007 and the fourth highest for January since reliable record keeping began in 1880. It also marked the 38th consecutive January and 347th consecutive month (almost 29 years) with a global temperature above the 20th century average. The last below-average January global temperature was January 1976 and the last below-average global temperature for any month was February 1985.

“Most areas of the world experienced warmer-than-average monthly temperatures, with the most notable warmth across Alaska, western Canada, southern Greenland, south-central Russia, Mongolia, and northern China. Parts of southeastern Brazil and central and southern Africa experienced record warmth, contributing to the warmest January Southern Hemisphere land temperature departure on record at 2.03°F (1.13°C) above the 20th century average. Temperature departures were below the long-term average across the eastern half of the contiguous U.S, Mexico, and much of Russia. However, no regions of the globe were record cold.”



Crisp-dried leaves on *Citrus* tree. Photo S. McDonald.

COLD DAMAGE IN THE TIDEWATER VIRGINIA AREA by Sandra McDonald

As we all know this has been a tough winter for the U.S. east coast with several periods of very cold weather.

Borderline hardy plants have had a tough time this winter. I have a semi-hardy citrus tree which bore some fruit last year. The really cold weather, about 17 degrees F, made the leaves on it crisp-

dried. It's the first time I have seen that. The stems are still green so I'm hoping it will come back in the spring. I have several different cultivars of *Loropetalum chinense*, and the hardiness seems to vary a bit among them. Some look better than others after the cold. The white one hardly shows any



Winter-burned young leaves on *Loropetalum*. Photo S. McDonald.

damage at all even though it was pruned late to get rid of some wild shoots. The purple-leaved, pink-flowered forms show more burn.

Amazingly, so far my gardenias don't seem to be damaged. I have tried to keep with the hardier selections through the years.

The evergreen azaleas seem to have lost more leaves than they usually do; the live oaks have dropped a lot of leaves early, but still have plenty of leaves. The new growth should be coming out in a month or so.

Some hellebores are now blooming and the crocuses have been blooming for a while. It was quite a surprise when I was raking leaves off the bed almost two week ago and found the first crocuses already blooming under the leaves.

Mike Andruczyk, who lives in Chesapeake, VA, told me a few days ago that in his yard some *Eucalyptus*, *Callistemon*, *Hedychium*, *Gardenia*, *Ficus*, *Trachelospermum*, and *Pittosporum* have winter burn. He hopes they are not completely dead and will know after spring arrives.



Remember all photos can be seen in color and ENLARGED at MACARS.ORG. Click on Newsletter on left panel.

GARDENS OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS - New members are encouraged to visit members' gardens in their area. The officers and board members have agreed to show new members through their gardens if the member will call ahead and arrange a convenient time. Telephone numbers and towns are listed below. **Memberships and renewals should be sent to our Membership Chairman Jeanne Hammer at 815 Porter St. Apt 301, Richmond, VA 23224.** Annual membership dues are \$40 per year. Miscellaneous inquiries may be sent to the editor (address below) for forwarding to proper individual.

Sandra McDonald, Ph.D., Editor
Mid-Atlantic Rhododendron News and Notes
4302 Chesapeake Ave
Hampton, VA 23669