

# MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON NEWS AND NOTES

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

Vol. XXXXI No.3

September 2014

## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

MAC Fall Meeting  
October 11, 2014

Proposed: April 17-19, 2015  
Proposed: Fall, 2015  
April 20-24, 2016

No information available yet  
ARS/ASA Joint District Meeting, Tyson's  
Galleria, McLean, VA  
Raleigh, N.C.  
Roslyn Center, Richmond, VA  
ARS Convention, Williamsburg, Virginia

## Rhododendron Web Site Addresses:

American Rhododendron Society	<a href="http://www.rhododendron.org/">http://www.rhododendron.org/</a>
ARS Store Order from Amazon thru this site	<a href="http://arsstore.org/">http://arsstore.org/</a>
MAC Website (UPDATED REGULARLY)	<a href="http://www.macars.org/">http://www.macars.org/</a>
UVA Special Collections	<a href="http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/">http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/</a>
Old Quarterly Bulletins & JARS	<a href="http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/">http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/</a>
Rhododendron Blog	<a href="http://www.rhododendron.org/blog/">www.rhododendron.org/blog/</a>
Friends of the National Arboretum	<a href="http://savetheazaleas.org/">http://savetheazaleas.org/</a>
FONA's Save the Azaleas and Boxwood site	

## MAC FALL MEETING

The MAC Fall Meeting date and time is uncertain at press time, but a meeting notice will come out later. We suggest that you keep on checking the MAC website at <http://macars.org/events.html> to see if any new information appears regarding the meeting.

## 2015 ARS RENEWALS by Jeanne Hammer

Fall is the season to renew your membership for 2015 in the American Rhododendron Society - Middle Atlantic Chapter. Expect a membership renewal reminder in the mail in late September or early October. However, whether a regular MAC member or an Associate member, you can save a stamp and instead renew through PayPal by connecting to <http://www.macars.org/joining1.html> Renewals through PayPal generate automatic email messages to MAC's membership chair and Treasurer.

## WINDBEAM WAY WANDERINGS, September 2014 by Doug Jolley

Following a slow to commence but floriferous spring season, the summer of 2014 here in central West Virginia has been one of the best. The June blooming native azaleas both here at home and in the wild had banner seasons. A mid-June trip to the Shaver's Fork

of the Cheat River in Randolph County, WV, was well timed. *Rhododendron arborescens* was in full bloom in all the usual stops. In addition to the typical plants, I photographed a very dark pink budded plant alongside the river. Flowering along the Williams River and the Cranberry and Cherry Rivers was impressive in these locations too.



Doug Jolley

Our area experienced plenty of rainfall this season. The shade houses holding seedlings and cuttings required manual watering on only two occasions. Throughout the garden beds this summer, the predominant weed has been Cardinal Flower. Dozens of plants are flowering throughout the garden much to the delight of our resident hummingbirds. I can think of worse weeds than Cardinal Flower.

The flowering of our *Rhododendron prunifolium* has been terrific this late summer too. The grandest plant is a six foot by six foot plant that we got from Ken and Sandra McDonald in the eighties of the last century.

Finally, a visit to a favorite mountain cranberry bog in early July was a treat. In addition to countless numbers of pitcher plants, Rose Pogonia and Small's Twayblade Orchids and pristine thickets of blooming *R. maximum*; cranberries were blooming everywhere.

Cranberry picking season will be here will be greatly anticipated this fall.

### IN THE CROZET GARDEN by Lloyd Willis

Mrs. Willis and I retired on January 1, 2013 with plans to work on some landscaping projects that have been on my to do list for a least twenty years.

One of those projects was done this spring. A new plant bed was placed under 10 to 25 year-old sugar maples. The size of that new plant bed was 12 feet by 98 feet. In that space was added 44 one gallon English boxwoods, 47 one gallon hostas, 8 three gallon Japanese maples, and 12 two gallon rhodos.

I am guessing we used three pickup loads of pine bark mulch to cover the new plant bed. This project was mainly done by me and a friend who helps with our garden design projects. We worked one afternoon a week for eight weeks. This is our largest plant bed to date.



Lloyd Willis

So what humor do I have to report in this note? Shortly after all the above work was done our grandson Silas, age 6, came to share breakfast with us. After breakfast he states, "I am now ready to work for change." I am excited. Maybe he can help Granddad "change for the better." So I asked, "What would you like to change with your work?" At this point Mrs. Willis and Silas both explained that Silas wanted to be paid in change. Silas went home with all my change: one dime, two nickels, and three pennies. Silas was excellent help for the 15 minutes he worked.

### DEATHS

**Sharon M. Allender** died on August 5, 2014, in Richmond. She had been an attorney in the Office of the Solicitor from 1971 to 1997 and had represented the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She is survived by her husband John Trezise, a son Mark, daughter Rachel Druff, a grandson, and five siblings. Sharon and her family had been living in Maryland, and just moved down to the Richmond area in 2013.

Although **Ed Collins** was not a MAC member, he was an ARS member whom many of us knew. His garden was on tour at an ARS Convention in Asheville, N.C. Ed died on July 20, 2014, in Hobe Sound, Florida.

**Robert "Bob" Theodore Stelloh**, of Hendersonville, N.C. died July 15th, 2014, after a long battle against cancer. He was four days short of his 80th birthday.

Bob was born and raised in Saint Louis, Missouri. In high school he was a competitive bicycle racer and won the Missouri State Championship. He served in the US Army during the Korean War as a surveyor. Afterward, he received Bachelor's and Master's degrees at the Missouri School of Mines, now Missouri S&T, whereupon he became fascinated with the nascent field of computer science. After graduation, Bob moved to California to work for Lockheed as a Computer Engineer. In 1968, he co-founded International Computing Company and eventually moved to Bethesda, Maryland where he and his colleagues developed systems for customers such as NYC off-track betting, Dow Jones, NASDAQ, the Milwaukee Blood Bank, and the US Passport Office.

When Bob retired, he moved to Hendersonville, North Carolina, where he pursued his passion for gardening, especially his love of azaleas and rhododendrons. The Stelloh Garden is his legacy, a work of art featuring over 1000 different azalea cultivars. He mapped his garden beds and tracked precise plant locations and detailed



Bob Stelloh

plant descriptions using a computer program he developed and named "Garden Information Manager". GIM was purchased and is used by several Arboretums and Botanic Gardens including the Lewis Ginter Garden in Richmond VA. The Stelloh Garden has been featured on numerous national and local garden tours, during which visitors couldn't help but appreciate Bob's genuine, friendly spirit, his keen interest in sharing garden knowledge and experiences, and his overall love of life.

Bob and Audrey were members the Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS. Bob was an ardent member of the Azalea Society of America. He designed and managed the Azalea Society website for 15 years, served as Treasurer for 10 years, and was co-founder of the local Azalea Society chapter, where he served as treasurer. Another of his legacies is the photographing and cataloging of 1000's of different azaleas at [www.pbase.com/azaleasociety](http://www.pbase.com/azaleasociety).

Bob is survived by his wife, Audrey Lash Stelloh, of Hendersonville; daughter Jennifer Marie Stelloh of Takoma Park, Maryland; and step-daughter Michelle Stratton of Santa Ana, California.

### **DEER DETERRENT SOAP BAR**

At the MAC August Board Meeting George McLellan showed a possible deer repellent soap bar which he is trying out. It is called Whiff and is available from Schlabach's Nursery, telephone 585-798-6198. It is also available at <https://www.countrymax.com/Whiff-Deer-Deterrent-Soap-Bar/>

The small soap bars are like motel soap bars, still in their wrappers with holes drilled in them and twist ties attached to tie onto trees, shrubs, and vines. The special soap is one that has been discontinued by motels, but seems to work as a deer repellent. The odor is rather strong. They are said to last about 6 months when left in their wrappers as directed. George has information on several other deer deterrents. He can be reached at the phone number listed on the back of the newsletter.

### **THE INTERNATIONAL BOTANICAL CONGRESS**

At a meeting in Melbourne, Australia, members of The International Botanical Congress from all over the world ruled that descriptions in Latin are an 'irrelevant anachronism' and should now be written in English. Descriptions of new botanical species had previously had to be written in Latin. Now English can now be used as an alternative when publishing formal descriptions of plants, fungi and algae. The change will not apply to animals yet. The rules will also not apply to the plant names themselves yet.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/science-news/11068023/Could-Latin-species-names-die-out-Rules-change-to-allow-English-descriptions.html>

### **ARS DISTRICT 9 DIRECTOR'S REPORT** by Don Hyatt

Please join us for a joint District 9 ARS and Northern VA ASA banquet on October 11, 2014, at the Wildfire Restaurant in Tyson's Galleria in Northern Virginia. Harold Greer, world renowned rhododendron expert and master photographer, will be our speaker. Details and registration forms will be provided soon.

For the next two years, our District needs to focus on the Joint ARS/ASA Convention we will be hosting in Williamsburg from April 20-24, 2016. The convention committee has been busy this spring visiting private and public gardens in the three areas we expect to tour: Richmond, Norfolk, and Gloucester. We have also been trying to line up speakers and refine other program details. Check out our website: [www.arsasaconvention2016.org](http://www.arsasaconvention2016.org)

Each chapter has been propagating rare rhododendrons and azaleas for the convention plant sale, and I am amazed at the many great varieties we have on the way. Some groups will need volunteers to help with repotting in the near future. As the convention draws near, there will be a greater need for volunteers so I hope that each of our members will try to find at least some small way to assist in hosting this event. We really need your help!

As your District 9 Director, I attended the ARS Board Meeting on May 15 at the 2014 ARS Convention in Ohio. Conference attendance was low, about 160 members, but all went well. Bill Mangels retired as ARS Treasurer and Sam Burd of the Potomac Valley Chapter has taken over. We want to thank Bill for his many years of service!

Most of the time at the Board Meeting was spent discussing the budget and some serious financial problems. When District 9 hosted the 2006 Convention in Rockville, the ARS had over 5000 members and our finances were sound. At present, we have only 2800 members and that is causing serious financial concerns. With only \$30 of your \$40 ARS membership dues going to the national, annual revenue for the ARS is only \$84,000 and that barely covers half of our expenses. Many items are fixed costs that don't change with the reduced membership. We are not facing bankruptcy at the moment, but when expenses far exceed income, we must make some major changes!

Our society's primary expenses are really split between two main areas: 1) the administrative costs of the ARS Office and 2) the costs to publish the ARS Journal. The administrative expenses in 2013-14 were \$82,231 and included a salary of \$51,081 for Laura Grant, \$3000 for room rental in her home, accounting fees of \$5900, a salary of \$2500 for an assistant, \$2700 for auto travel to Niagara in the US to pick up mail, a travel allowance of \$2800, \$2500 for postage (not including the cost to mail the Journal), and various other minor office expenses.

The cost of producing the Journal was \$68,785 in 2013-14. It included an honorarium of \$17,998 for the editor Glen Jamieson, a \$9,037 honorarium for assistant editor Sonja Nelson, \$22,400 for printing the Journal, \$13,750 for postage to mail it, an \$1800 travel allowance, and some other minor expenses.

One immediate cost-saving recommendation was to ask chapters to stop using the PO Box in Niagara. At \$0.50 per mile, frequent trips add up quickly (\$2700). This change will primarily affect Membership Chairs and Chapter Treasurers since they correspond more frequently. First Class postage to Canada is currently \$1.15 for up to two ounces. We cannot eliminate the PO Box if we want to continue as a non-profit entity in the US, but we can cut down on the frequency of picking up mail. Please send important mail directly to Laura Grant's home in Canada:

Laura Grant, 27 Taylor Dr, Toronto, Ontario, M4C 3B4, CANADA

The ARS does have other assets it can use to meet short term deficits, but the reality is that we must make some major changes. President Bruce Feller and the other ARS officers will be seeking long term solutions.

There were other actions of the Board of lesser importance such as approving the Portland Chapter to host the 2020 Convention which will be out of sequence for a West Coast event. It will be the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ARS. Next year will be the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the convention will be near Victoria, BC. Bill Mangels who still chairs the Endowment fund received unanimous support to try to raise that fund to \$1 million by 2015. Feel free to give!

Bruce Feller noted that it is becoming more difficult to find groups willing to host society events. He explored a joint fall meeting in 2015 with the American Conifer Society but that has fallen through. The New York Chapter will hold that Fall Regional on Long Island from October 16-18, 2015. Chapters are asked to avoid those dates.

Members are encouraged to use the online Journal. You must set up an account using your membership number through the ARS Office: [www.arsoffice.org](http://www.arsoffice.org). The online Journal is usually posted before the print version arrives. Steve Henning reported on the ARS Store. It earns the ARS a commission when people go there first before making online purchases to vendors like Amazon. Please try to use this portal when buying online: [www.arsstore.org](http://www.arsstore.org)

There was discussion about Journal advertising for meetings like our 2016 convention. The board did

authorize the Journal to provide four pages of black and white space free of charge for convention registration and program details. If more space or a formal insert is desired, groups would be charged standard advertising rates.

The next ARS Board meeting will be at the Western Regional in Everett, WA, on September 25. If you have issues or concerns, please let me know. I want to sincerely thank District 9 for your kind support!

## MAC MEMBER IN THE NEWS

Doug Jolley is again in the *Wonderful West Virginia* magazine for September 2014. Doug took the cover photo of a magnificent red-tailed hawk that is pied leucistic since it has some patches of color including the characteristic red tail and normal eye color. Doug says he has seen the white phase of the hawk only twice. It is not albino as the eyes are not red.

Leucism is a condition in animals characterized by reduced pigmentation. Unlike albinism, it is caused by a reduction in all types of skin pigment, not just melanin.

Most of the photos and many quotes in the "Roadside Raptors" article starting on page 20 are Doug's. The article was written by Sheila McEntee.

## SHRUB GROWTH AS WINTER TEMPERATURES FLUCTUATE

A study by Melanie A. Harsch, Matt S. McGlone, and Janet M. Wilmshurst out of the University of Washington says that shrubs achieve less yearly growth when cold winter temperatures are interrupted by temperatures warm enough to trigger growth.

"When winter temperatures fluctuate between being cold and warm enough for growth, plants deplete their resources trying to photosynthesize and end the winter with fewer reserves than they initially had. In the summer they have to play catch up," said Melanie Harsch, a University of Washington postdoctoral researcher in biology and applied mathematics. She is lead author of a paper on the subject recently published in PLOS One.

Roots also use up carbon reserves with warmer temperatures.

University of Washington. "Shrub growth decreases as winter temperatures fluctuate, triggering premature spring growth." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 20 May 2014.

<[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/05/140520142327.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/05/140520142327.htm)>.





*R. prunifolium* Photo by Doug Jolley.



*R. arborescens* Photo by Doug Jolley.



Hummingbird on cardinal flower Photo by Doug Jolley



*R. tashiroi* Photo by S. McDonald



*R. prinophyllum* (seed from Missouri) Photo by S. McDonald.



*R. colemanii* Photo by S. McDonald.



*R. flammeum* Photo by S. McDonald.



*R. reticulatum* Photo by S. McDonald.



*R. weyrichii*, white form. Photo by S. McDonald



*R. canescens* Photo by S. McDonald



*R. alabamense* Photo by S. McDonald

**THESE PLANTS GREW UP BEAUTIFULLY**  
by Sandra McDonald (*Photos on page 5.*)

These last few years I have been impressed with how lovely some species of the native azaleas, hybrids, and other rhododendron species can be as they mature. I am especially reminded of this during the summer and early fall when some later blooming natives show off.

My seed work began in 1975 with mostly my own evergreen azaleas followed shortly afterward by many species of rhododendrons ordered from the ARS Seed Exchange, along with a few hand pollinated elepidote rhododendron crosses. Being a new resident of Tidewater Virginia in 1975, my first objective was to see what species would grow best here. I had previously worked with Dr. Gustav Mehlquist at the University of Connecticut so was familiar with some of the rhododendrons that would grow in a colder climate. With this article I want to concentrate on native azaleas and some of the Asian species rather than the whole rainbow of many thousands of rhododendron seedlings I have grown.

Most years I planted a few lots of native azalea seed and a few Asian species from Sections Brachycalyx and Tsutsusi in addition to my own crosses and other seed. The ones I tried were deciduous and seemed to have good survival rates in our hot Tidewater climate.. The rhododendrons from Japan mostly did quite well. I tried to select seed from Japanese seed donors of their often special forms of their native species. I had several seed lots from Hideo Suzuki, some from Dr. Rokijo, and some from a few other Japanese contributors.

For our U.S. native species, I started with *R.calendulaceum* which wasn't too happy with our heat in Tidewater. That species didn't thrive here. Then gradually I tried other species, including some from Fred Galle who was actually a member of our Middle Atlantic Chapter way back in the 1970s even though he lived in Georgia.

In 1979 Ken and I made our first hike up Gregory Bald with Joan Winter who had hiked up it one other time and told us how pretty it was. After seeing the swarm of azaleas on Gregory Bald, I became even more interested in growing the natives. Later we made several more hikes up Gregory and other places with George McLellan and a few others. (Don Hyatt, David and Debby Sauer, Bill Bedwell, Neil Jorgensen, Jim Brant, Tom Nuccio, German botanist Dr. Hartwig Schepker and his camera crew, etc.)

The azaleas up on Gregory turned out not to be

very tolerant of our heat, although *R. cumberlandense* did rather well for us. Therefore I did a few crosses using pollen *R. cumberlandense* on some of our natives here to see if I could get more heat tolerance. I tried seed from a few native species in other locations, too.

The ARS Seed Exchange was very helpful when people like Mark Weiderlechner contributed seed of species from outer areas of their main distribution. Mark had collected seed of *R. prinophyllum* from its hotter, outlying populations in places like the Missouri Ozarks. This made it possible to raise some heat tolerant plants of *R. prinophyllum* that do well in Tidewater Virginia.

Native azalea species like *R. prunifolium*, *R. flammeum*, *R. austrinum*, and *R. canescens* from the southern states have done exceptionally well here. I had good success with *R. prunifolium* at the nursery and subsequently was given a bit more seed of it by George McLellan when he went to see the species in Providence Canyon. So now I even have a fairly mature plant of *R. prunifolium* grown from that seed.

The local species *R. viscosum*, *R. atlanticum*, and *R. periclymenoides* grow fine here also. The plants of these species are mostly rescues from a family farm in York County and cuttings or suckers from special selections growing under power line or in other right-of-ways. These areas get sprayed with weed killer periodically. I hate to see special plants killed like that.

Our yard is not very big, so we really do not have much space to plant large numbers of azaleas and rhododendrons at home. Most of my plants stayed at the nursery and many that were not sold were donated to a few gardens. I did keep some that I thought were especially nice and transplanted them into our yard. These last few years these have surprised me with how lovely they are as they mature. After the carnival of spring bloom is over, a few of the natives make their later appearances and stretch the season all the way through summer.



**Remember all photos can be seen in color and ENLARGED at [MACARS.ORG](http://MACARS.ORG). Click on Newsletter on left panel.**

**ARS/ASA Joint District Meeting and Banquet  
Harold Greer - "Rhododendron Diversity"**

**When:** Saturday, October 11, 2014 11:00 AM - 3:30 PM  
**Where:** Wildfire Restaurant at Tysons Galleria (Tysons II)  
2001 International Drive, McLean, VA 22102  
**Price:** \$42.00 per person (including tax and tip)

**Registration Deadline: 10/4/  
2014**

**Menu: Surf & Turf Combo** (Grilled Salmon and Filet Mignon) or **Vegetarian** (Black Bean Burger)  
The Wildfire Restaurant serves family style meals, and we selected a premium surf and turf entrée combo. Each table will receive platters of both cedar planked grilled salmon and filet mignon, and diners can take a serving of each one. For vegetarians, the alternative entrée is their popular black bean burger. The meal will begin with Chopped Salad, Bison Meatballs, and Cornbread. Side dishes served with the entrée will include Redskin Mashed Potatoes and Balsamic Roasted Vegetables. The dessert choices will be Key Lime Pie and Triple Layer Chocolate Cake. Coffee, tea, and soda are included with the meal. We will have a cash bar.

**Our Speaker and Program: Harold Greer - "Rhododendron Diversity"**  
For most of us in the rhododendron world, Harold Greer needs no introduction. He is undeniably one of the leading authorities on the genus. Many of us consider him the best! Having worked with rhododendrons and azaleas since early childhood, Harold has a depth of knowledge that few can match. He and his wife Nancy own Greer Gardens, a wonderful nursery in Eugene, OR. Harold is a renowned author, a celebrated hybridizer, a phenomenal photographer, and a very entertaining speaker. We are thrilled to have him!  
Harold will present one of his most popular programs, a multimedia PowerPoint presentation on Rhododendron Diversity. Expect to be amazed with his overview of rhododendrons and azaleas including variations in flowers, foliage, and plant habits. Your 2016 Convention Committee will give a brief preview of the Williamsburg meeting, and also auction off a few rare plants to help defray Harold's expenses.

**Directions to the Wildfire Restaurant:**  
From the Capital Beltway, I-495, take the Chain Bridge Road exit onto Rt. 123 toward Tysons Corner. Near the top of the hill, turn right onto International Drive and take the second right into the upper parking area for Tysons Galleria. The restaurant is located on the third floor between Saks Fifth Avenue and Macy's, but look for the convenient outside elevator that goes directly to the restaurant. For public transportation, the Tysons Corner Station of the new Silver Line of the Metro Subway is just a short walk from the Galleria.

**Registration Deadline: October 4, 2014**  
We are using this event to practice some mechanics of the 2016 Convention, and provide two registration methods. For secure online registration using credit card or PayPal, link to the MAC website:  
[www.macars.org/events.html](http://www.macars.org/events.html)  
If you prefer to pay by check, fill out the registration form below and mail with payment to Dave Banks. He must receive it no later than 10/04/2014. Make checks payable to **ARS/ASA Convention 2016**.  
**Dave Banks - Registrar, 215 Charter House Lane, Williamsburg, VA 23188**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Print the name of each attendee and indicate entrée choice: Enclose a check to cover the cost for each meal (\$42).

1) \_\_\_\_\_ **Combo or Vegetarian** Cost: \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_ **Combo or Vegetarian** Cost: \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_ **Combo or Vegetarian** Cost: \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**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