

MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON NEWS AND NOTES

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Rhododendron Society

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

April 30 - May 2, 2021 (tentative) Roslyn Retreat, Henrico, VA

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/
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/

FALL MEETING CANCELLED

MAC could not hold an in-person meeting this fall because of the restrictions imposed due to the covid pandemic. Our spring meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 30-May 2, 2021.

IN THE CROZET GARDEN by Lloyd Willis

It is Friday, November 20, 2020 as I start this article. The 8 am walk and breakfast have been completed. I plan to be outside working in the yard on garden projects soon.

Margaret and I are still on modified house arrest. We still get to go once a week to pick up items outside Walmart, visit nursery centers, and attend church. With end-of-season sales, I have gotten lots and lots of plants—which are yet to be planted. We also made trips to two colleges see grandchildren, Ava (21) at JMU and Stuart (18) at University of Richmond. We had meals with each in parks with social distancing. The trips were enjoyable and we felt as if we were on parole.

So what has been going on in the garden since I last wrote? We have planted two hosta beds close to each other that had 15 hostas in each. They were sprayed with liquid deer fence once a week for several weeks and only one hosta had a deer take a bite out of it. Those hostas are now looking wilted since we have had heavy frost two days in a row. Behind those hosta beds are several very nice dark green rhodos and one azalea with dark red buds.



For the last two or three years, November 15 has been the peak of the fall color in our garden. This year it was November 13. The color is mainly due to a variety of Japanese maples plus a few red and sugar maples. We could be in our back yard and see striking shades of orange, yellow, and red in all directions. In several places, the contrast with the green rhodos made an extra special sight. This fall had the best color I have ever seen in our garden, but, of course, I say that every year. Now even after the peak, there are still some Japanese maples that have yet to start their color change. Something to look forward to. It's also interesting to see the carpets of yellow, orange, and red around the trees whose leaves have fallen.

So where is the humor in this article? It is as you know time to deal with the leaves that have fallen—the brown, dead leaves of the poplars, oaks, and sugar maples. I recently called the older daughter and asked if grandson Silas (12) wanted me to leave him some leaves again this year for his annual leaf pile. She checked. Silas said yes. The next day in the back field there were three rakes, my garden cart and a pile of leaves at least five feet tall, however, no Silas jumping in the leaves. The day after that, the pile of leaves was scattered and only about a foot high. I was disappointed that Margaret and I didn't get to see him jumping into his leaf pile. A week after that Margaret calls out, "You might want to see this on Facebook." I walk upstairs to the computer. There is a video of Silas and one of his buddies running and jumping into the five foot leaf pile. Both are disappearing in seconds. So far I have

watched it just a few times. Oh, the rakes and garden cart are still there in the field.

WINDBEAM WAY WANDERINGS, December 2020 by Doug Jolley

The autumn garden season has been very uneventful save for the fact that plants are heavily budded, rainfall has been ample and the temperatures mild. A garden walkabout makes one anxious for next spring to arrive.



The native witch hazels have put on a show this fall. Frosty nights have been



Witch hazel. Photo by Doug Jolley.

late to arrive and few at that. Relishing the mild conditions, the plants have bloomed for weeks. This time of year, the bright yellow flowers are one of the few things to attract insects. One morning, one large witch hazel was playing host to multiple ruby and golden crowned



Golden Crowned Kinglet. Photo by Doug Jolley.

Some snowy days and cold nights will be welcome if held to a modicum. We have rhodos and azaleas to enjoy in a few months !



Bud on *R. smirnowii*. Photo by Doug Jolley.



Ruby Crowned Kinglet. Photo by Doug Jolley.



Red autumn color on a Tolstead hybrid. Photo by Doug Jolley.

kinglets. After a half hour feeding and photo session the band of south bound nomads was just a memory.



Beautiful red fall color on Tolstead hybrid. Photo by Doug Jolley.



'Dexter's Champagne' with many buds. Photo by Doug Jolley.

ARS FALL BOARD MEETING by Sandra McDonald

The ARS Board held a virtual board meeting via RingCentral on October 27. David Banks, Don Hyatt, Ann Mangels, and Bill Meyers were members or associates of MAC who attended, and I attended as chair of the Archives Committee because I wanted to see how this fairly new type of meeting was conducted. A total of 32 members attended.

Since there will probably be minutes of the meeting published in JARS, I will only give a brief summary.



A sample of Nova Scotia scenery for tours from Jim Sharpe's outline.

Jim Sharpe gave a brief outline of the 2021 Spring Convention which is scheduled for Nova Scotia from June 3 to 6, 2021. Since they don't know what will be happening at that time and borders may still be closed, they are planning a hybrid convention.

They hope to have an in-person convention for those who can attend and a virtual convention of talks and tours for those who cannot travel to Nova Scotia. The cost for the virtual convention is

estimated to be about \$60 U.S. The Board meeting will be virtual.



Nova Scotia scenery.

The ARS Next-Gen Project by Christina Woodward and Juliana Medeiros was put on hold due to the pandemic. They decided to move to some virtual projects.

Don Hyatt and Maria Stewart brought a recommendation from the Editorial Committee that the Rhododendron and Azalea News be resurrected. This would be for material not suitable for JARS and would be emailed to members. It would have lots of photos with links to additional information. The board was supportive.

Bob Weissman announced that the last unarchived



ARS Secretary Linda Derkach. Image snipped from my computer screen during the virtual board meeting.

JARS volume has been posted online at the Virginia Tech library website. That website has volumes 1-64 and is open to everyone. The five most current years are at the ARS website and are restricted to ARS members.

There were several other items of business that will be available in the official ARS minutes.

Some MAC members are most likely already familiar with virtual meetings, but others may not

be. These last couple of photos were snipped from my computer screen during the meeting, and I



Twenty-five of the 32 members who attended the virtual ARS Board Meeting. Twenty-five is the maximum that show up on my computer screen in this program.

thought some of you who had not been to a virtual meeting would like to see just a bit of what one is like. During the meeting some of the presenters, for example Dave Banks, were able to put reports on their screens so that everyone could follow along with the report.

Other types of virtual meetings do not have to show the participants, or if a participant is shy and he or she does not want to show the location he can have the camera and/or audio turned off on his personal computer. Some of us are hoping that MAC can have virtual meetings if this pandemic situation continues.

UPDATE FROM SOUTHEAST VIRGINIA by Sandra McDonald

Here in Southeast Virginia's Tidewater area we had a wet year. George McLellan said he had almost 60 inches of rain by November 18. I'm not sure how



Camellia sasanqua. Photo Sandra McDonald.

much Hampton had, but I did have 5 3/8 inches a few day ago. Average annual rainfall for Gloucester County is 47 inches and for Hampton it is 46 inches. George had three to four weeks of hot, dry weather in the summer, as I did in Hampton. The plants suffered at that time.



Camellia sasanqua seedling. Photo S. McDonald.

We did have a lot of plant growth this year with all the rain. The *Camellia sasanqua* plants are lovely now and a few early *C. japonica* and hybrids are starting to bloom. The *C. sasanquas* are outdoing themselves this year.

George has a large collection of the newer hybrid camellias. He was recommending Camellia 'Yume', a hybrid which has flowers that seem to stand cold down to 22 degrees F. Most of my camellias are rather old plants, well over 60 years old, that Ken's father planted. I don't know the names of most of them.



Camellia 'Yume'

With the changing climate we are having increased numbers of hurricanes. Luckily, this year we only had the brush with Hurricane Isaias back in August. The Gulf Coast and Central America had much more devastation.



Camellia 'October Affair'.

The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season has been the most active on record with 31 tropical and subtropical depressions, 30 names storms, 13 hurricanes, and 6 major hurricanes. This

was the second season to use the Greek letter storm-naming after running out of our English alphabet names.



Old double white and double pink *Camellia sasanquas* in the McDonald yard. Photo S. McDonald.



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.

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