

Rhododendron



'Holden's Solar Flair'



'Tiana'



'Harold Amateis'

Great Lakes Chapter American Rhododendron Society

Purpose

A Nonprofit organization whose aim is to promote in the Great Lakes region the objectives of The American Rhododendron Society to encourage interest in and dissemination of information about genus rhododendron including azaleas; to provide a medium through which all persons interested may communicate and operate with others of like interest through educational and scientific studies, meetings, publications and similar activities.

Meetings

Meetings are held four times each year, on the third weekend of March, May, August and October, unless otherwise indicated

Membership

Membership is open to all persons interested in the growth and culture of rhododendrons and azaleas as per the Chapter By-Laws. Those persons interested in becoming a member should contact the Membership Chairman, Dr. L. Gordon Walters.

Officers/Board Members

President,	Steve Krebs	440.602.3831
skrebs@holdenarb.org		
Secretary	Karen Wagner	814.725.1584
wagsix@roadrunner.com		
Treasurer	Margaret Corbin	814.833.7207
gramcl@aol.com		
Membership	Dr. L.G. Walters	724.287.2047
1932@zoominternet.net		
Newsletter	Annette Pizzino	440.248.4583
annettepizzino@roadrunner.com, pro		
Web Master	Robert Kotson	

Past President Dr. Steve Krebs

Board of Directors

Kay Walters	6 year term
Karen Wagner	4 year term

Chas Wagner rhodo mentor, **wagsix@roadrunner.com**

Great Lakes Chapter Website

www.greatlakesrhodies.org

Username—greatlakes password—maximum

Robert Kotson rkotson@gmail.com

Web Master

Cover:

Truss Show Holden Arboretum May, 2016

**'Peoples Choice' Vote results:
Top photo, 'Holden's Solar Flair'
-placed first in both categories.**

**Runners-up, 2nd choices:
Bottom left photo, 'Tiana'
Bottom right 'Harold Amateis'
Photos Tony Pizzino**

**"We receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live."
Samuel T. Colebridge**



President's message

My fellow aficionados,

We have another rhododendron season behind us and hopefully it has been a good one for you. It sounds like most of us have had a lot of heat and dryness, and have done a fair amount of irrigating. None the less, at the Leach Station I have been impressed with the abundance and quality of growth on our plants, even on many of our field plants that are getting full exposure to the sun and heat. Going into the fall it looks like the flower bud set is high, setting the stage for another good show next spring.

The Great Lakes Chapter is functioning on the energies of a small core group of members (fewer than 15) who attend meetings regularly and help organize events. These efforts paid off in a successful plant sale at the Holden Arboretum in May, which was fun, profitable, and gave us a lot of public exposure. I hope that you will attend this fall's meeting WW Nursery (Oct. 15, pg.7) where the propagation of choice and hard-to-find rhododendrons and azaleas continues under new ownership following passing of nurseryman and GLC member Ray Walyko. Specialty nurseries such as this are indispensable to plant hobbyists, and you just might find that plant you've been looking for all your life at the fall meeting.

*(Due to the GLC format of May, 2016, three- day plant sale/ truss show, at the Holden Arboretum, a visit to the Leach Station in Madison, Ohio to view, new, beautiful **R. hyperythrum hybrids**, & others, was scheduled out. Steve writes of this species important, attractive qualities.)*

Some like it Hot

*At the Leach Research Station, we have been working for many years on developing rhododendrons that are resistant to root rot, the most common cause of failure (death) in gardens. This disease is caused by a globally invasive fungus-like pathogen called *Phytophthora cinnamomi* that hangs out in the soil and attacks and destroys the root systems of susceptible plants in its quest for carbohydrate foods. Once the disease has spread extensively in the roots the above ground tissues, notably leaves, begin to droop and wilt as though the plant were water stressed. In Fact, the plant is water stressed, not because soil moisture is unavailable, but because the vascular system (plumbing) to get water from roots to shoots has been destroyed by *P. cinnamomi*. This pathogen is not just a problem for rhododendrons, but affects over 3000 species of plants world-wide.*

*Our resistance breeding program is based on hybridizing with a species from Taiwan—*R. hyperythrum* that is very resistant to root rot and transmits that trait well to its offspring. In addition, *R. hyperythrum* is very heat tolerant, and hybridizers like John Thornton in Franklinton, LA have been successful in using it to breed rhododendrons adapted to the Gulf South (USDA hardiness zone 9). His hybrids are now in the trade under the Southgate™ brand.*

*For consumers, root rot resistance is a valuable trait that would make rhododendrons much easier to grow. For commercial growers heat tolerance opens a new (southern) market for rhododendrons. In our estimation, both traits are achievable because they are probably functionally related. Disease resistance may be a key component of heat tolerance because disease pressure increases where the climate is warmer and wetter. To put this idea into practice, we developed a system where the *R. hyperythrum* derived breeding populations are first evaluated in NE Ohio (for field performance, ornamental traits, and cold hardiness), then the best selections from these populations are replicated (by rooting stem cuttings) and planted in a field trial in southern Louisiana. Our cooperator in this project is Plant Development Services Inc. (PDSI) based in Laxely, AL, producers of the Southgate™ rhododendrons and the well-known Encore™ azaleas.*

In Memoriam

William Glenn September 13, 1937 - June 21, 2016

Long time member of the Great Lakes Chapter, Bill also served as a GLC Board member, and was an enthusiastic rhodophile. Always pleasant, Bill was easy to talk with. His rhododendron garden, an example, of beautiful, mature well-grown rhododendrons, also displayed newer hybrids, attractively arranged through-out his grounds. Our Sincere Condolences.

**Ann Glenn
10259 Rt. 68
Rimersburg, PA 16248**

News Views— Short Updates May 13-15 Plant Sale/Truss show Holden Arboretum

2016 GLC/ARS Truss Show & Plant Sale



The GLC Plant Sale & Truss Show—Amid All Day Rain

Bob & Helen Kotson arrive with rhodie trusses for Truss Show



“People’s Choice” Tent Visitors– Cast Their Vote

Chas, Roberta, Silvia, Annette, Karen (hats, gloves, scarves fit the day)

Great Lakes Chapter/ARS Looks to the Future: Seen & Heard Pros & Cons

GLC members are too spread-out
Truss show needs to be condensed
Sell plants to attract new members

GLC is now a social gathering
Heard too often, “my plants just die.”
Join other ARS chapters, Master Gardeners
Plant sale, needs to offer newer hybrids
Holden, site— just sell plants

Meet at more central location, visit more gardens
In a public setting, truss show, an ‘attention getter’
Truss show exhibits—rhodos grown by members

Public setting, emphasize how to grow for success
Especially need, ‘How to plant pot-bound rhodies’
Same folks do all the planning
Exhibit more rhodos with attractive foliage
Not enough togetherness, no visit to Leach Station

All members are invited to comment on future meetings, agenda, plant sale/show,, speakers.

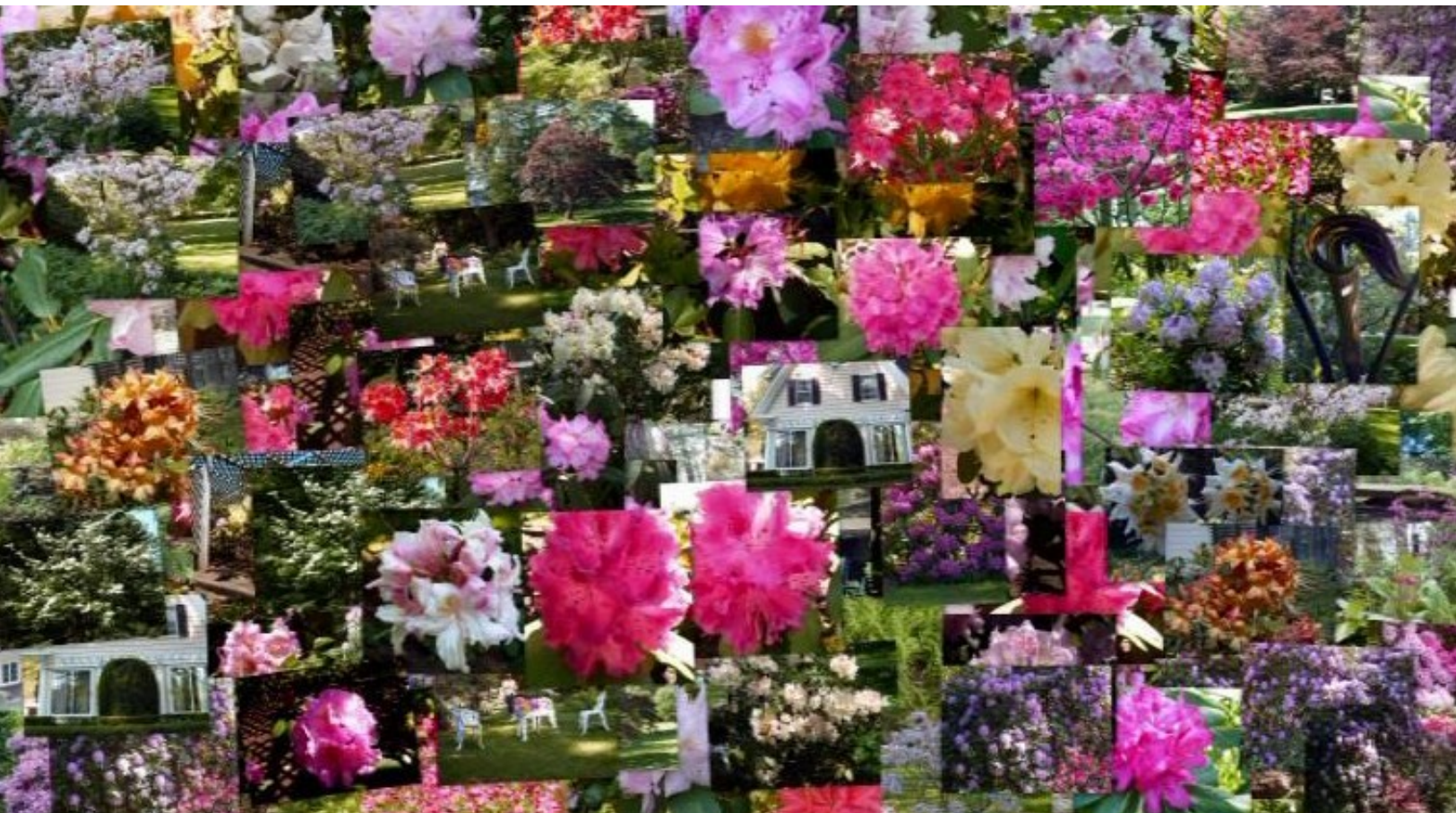
Rhododendron Roots Widely Diverse

Rhododendron enthusiasts are well aware of the variety of leaf types within the genus, ranging from literally as long as a man's arm to smaller than a fingernail. But have you ever wondered whether Rhododendron roots might also be highly diverse? In a recent Scientist Lecture Series seminar at The Holden Arboretum, Dr. Juliana Medeiros described work in her lab investigating the root morphology (i.e. the shapes and sizes) of 27 species of Rhododendrons growing in the Layer Garden at Holden Arboretum and at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Federal Way, Washington. Dr. Medeiros and her colleagues, Dr. Jean Burns (Case Western Reserve University) and Dr. Oscar Valverde-Barrantes (Kent State University) were surprised to discover that Rhododendrons are just as diverse in their root traits as they are in their leaf traits. The study also investigated the possibilities that ancestry and climate could be responsible for the assortment of root types in the genus. They found that closely related species of Rhododendron are more similar in their root traits than distantly related species. This suggests that diversity of root morphology arose long ago in ancient ancestral lineages, with similar traits being passed down to the sister species who descended from those ancient ancestors. They also found evidence that different climates (e.g. cold versus warm climates) are associated with very different root types, particularly in section Pentanthera. In contrast, root diversity in section Ponticum is less closely associated with climate, but may instead be influenced by other environmental factors such as the soil microbial community. Finally, comparisons between roots growing at Holden and at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden also demonstrated that Rhododendrons are able to adjust their root traits according to the current growing conditions. In fact, the differences across growing environments can be as large as the intrinsic differences between species. Follow-up studies are currently being conducted at Holden, including a study investigating the possibility that different types of soil microbes are associated with different types of roots

Juliana S. Medeiros Scientist
The Holden Arboretum Reprinted with permission
Conference webpage <https://www.grc.org/programs.aspx?id=17277>

Blossom McBrier's Brier Hill Garden, Fairview, PA Memorial Day, May 30, 2016

Every Blooming Tree, Every Blooming Shrub all Ablaze with Color—a Celebration of Spring 2016



Eric's Note

Eric Oesterling, Great Lakes Chapter/ARS member shares horticultural data, and Master Gardening updates

Companion Plant—Oakleaf Hydrangea

If you want a large deciduous shrub in your landscape to compliment rhododendrons, consider Oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*). A native woodland plant from the southeastern United States, it is hardy from zone 5 to zone 9. Young plants can be somewhat tender if not given winter protection but they seem to become tougher as they age. Oakleaf hydrangea produces large, conical white flower heads – from 4” to 12” long and 2 to 6” across. Flowering takes place in late June to early July after rhododendrons and most azaleas have long ago completed their show. Flowers age to pinkish and eventually brown and make good additions to dried arrangements. But the flowers are only part of the ornamental value of this plant. Other ornamental features include the large deeply lobed leaves that give the plant its name. They can be up to 8” long and 5” wide – creating an interesting coarse texture. Leaves of some cultivars like ‘Alice,’ ‘Alison,’ and ‘Snow Queen’ turn a nice burgundy color in late fall. And even when the branches are bare in winter the older stems have an attractive character with rich brown bark that peels vertically. All of these ornamental features contrast with and compliment rhododendrons very

Site requirements for Oakleaf hydrangea mirror those needed for rhododendrons. Oakleaf hydrangeas do best when plants have a moist but well aerated root run and some shade, although I have seen them growing fairly well in full sun with adequate moisture. This is not a small delicate shrub but a large coarse one that needs plenty of room in the landscape. Depending on cultivar, plants can grow to be 6 to 8 feet tall and usually spread wider than their height. There have been a number of improved selections named and marketed in recent years. Alice, Alison, Pee Wee, Snowflake, and Snow Queen are some of the better selections..



Companion Plant, Oakleaf Hydrangea, rich, deep- burgundy Fall color

R. hyperythrum

Heat Hot (continued from page 2) Test & photos Steve Krebs Director, Leach Research Station , Madison Ohio

Selections were put in the initial plantings 4 years ago, and we have learned a lot along the way. Although the original (Source) plants continue to do well in NE, a majority of the replicates have died during the trial, most within 1 to 2 years of planting. Based on appearances, the cause of mortality is *P. cinnamomi*, but that will be verified by further research. A small group of 30 individuals (about 20% of the starting material) has continued to thrive in spite of high temperatures and consideration. Just recently, the field received 24" of rain over a 4 day period as part of the weather system that created flooding and a state of emergency in nearby Louisiana. The plants are considered to be heat tolerant, in large part because they are resistant to root rot disease. By going back to the starting populations in Louisiana, we will retest the southern casualties and survivors using controlled greenhouse inoculations in order to confirm that *P. cinnamomi* resistance is a key to good performance in warm climate test conditions.

Many of the top 'doers' down South are attractive plants, and some will be introduced by PDSI as cultivars in the near future. The pictures shown below are a selection of some of the candidate cultivars. While not breakthrough plants in terms of ornamental value, they can boldly go where no rhododendron has gone before, and they are quite novel and, in theory, marketable. We will tell how well received they are by the public and how well they perform in a broad array of growing conditions.

Beautiful But Prone to Failure

chlorosis/wilting

root and crown necrosis

Phytophthora

10µm

Root Disease Caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi*

**After 4 years in southern trials
30 proven performers**

First Commercial Release: 2017

PLACE:

W.W. NURSERIES Nursery Phone 724.349.5653
188 Valley Green Drive (**Make sure Valley Green Drive**)
And not Green Valley Drive !
Indiana, PA 15701

HOSTS:

LeeAnn Mravunich, Frank Myers
David Walylko

TIME:

Arrive 11:00—Noon
LUNCHEON BUFFET NOON—1:00pm

LUNCHEON BUFFET: **RSVP: Lee Ann 724.388.0125**

CHICKEN –ROAST BEEF
FRIED NOODLES & CABBAGE
BACON RANCHIE CHEEZY POTATO, CORN/GREEN BEANS
FRUIT SALAD, DINNER ROLLS, DRINKS
Luncheon buffet \$10.00 per person please pay David on arrival

DEADLINE
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8TH

GLC MEETING OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS 1:00—2:30
DISCUSSION “LOOKING TO THE FUTURE”

SPEAKERS’ AGENDA

Time 2:30pm—4:30pm

David & Kathy Gable Stewartstown, Pa
“Life on the Gable Farm”

Frank Myers “Propagation & Greenhouse
Management”

David Walylko “Pesticides & Rhododendrons”
W.W. Nurseries Tour TBA

PLACES TO STAY

PARK INN

1395 Wayne Ave
Indiana, PA
\$129.00
724.349.3541

QUALITY INN

1545 Wayne Ave
Indiana, PA
\$112.50
724.349.9620

Mention
Rhododendron Society



‘David Gable’

Great Lakes Chapter/American Rhododendron Society Plant Sale & Truss Show.
GLC as vendor—Holden Arboretum Plant Sale— May 13-15, 2016



GLC Welcome Poster, displayed amid plants for sale, is drenched by Saturday's all day rain & Sunday's sudden snow fall—sale continued welcoming visitors to the GLC vendors tent as numerous plants were sold. Visitors were encouraged to step inside the tent, to vote, "Peoples' Choice." The Quest for new Great Lakes Chapter-members, continues,, as all, who purchased plants—invited to join.

Photos Tony Pizzino