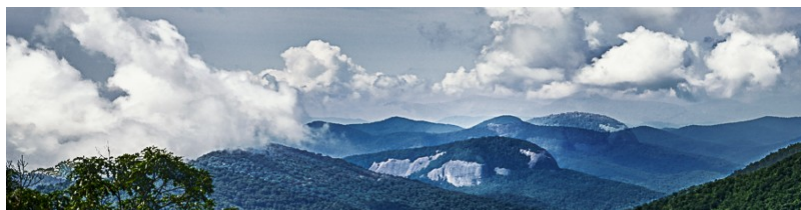




# The Blue Ridge Review



SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

October 2021

Encouragement of the culture of Rhododendrons

## JOIN US FOR AN OUTSIDE ADVENTURE AT THE SOUTH CAROLINA BOTANICAL GARDEN AT CLEMSON

We have a fun SE-ARS/Vaseyi outing planned for this fall. On Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, we'll meet at the South Carolina Botanical Garden at Clemson U at 1 pm. We'll meet at the famous red caboose located in the Heritage Garden. The main entrance to the South Carolina Botanical garden is located off Perimeter Road between Highway 76 and Perimeter Rd. You can download a map of the Botanical Garden at this address: <https://www.clemson.edu/public/scbg/visit/map.html> It might help you find the correct location if you put 102 Garden Trail in your GPS. There is plenty of parking available.

The garden is a 295 acre natural wonderland with bountiful trails leading through the largest collection of native plants in the Southeast. It began in 1958 as a camellia preserve on a small piece of land. The expanded project was initiated by the class of 1939; the caboose and the gardens that surround it honor important traditions of the class of 1939, and is attractive for its heritage and very appealing for children to visit. It also contains a visual display of important parts of Clemson's history and traditions.

The diversity you will experience as you stroll through the garden is inspiring. You can walk in an area that represents the flora of the barrier islands

of South Carolina, then you can wander through longleaf pine savannas. You can find 5,000-year-old shell rings and Piedmont granite flatrocks, then stroll through an area that contains hundreds of carnivorous plants.

I call the walk through the garden 'through hill and dale'. There are many paths to explore and each leads to a highlight. Imagine a place that has a children's garden, a hosta garden, a dwarf conifer garden, a camellia garden, a flower display garden, and a butterfly garden. This list covers only some of the adventures available here.

There's also a wonderful gift shop at the Fran Hanson Visitor Center which is close to the garden. I'm looking forward to starting some of my Christmas shopping at the gift shop. I'm pretty sure you'll need to bring a mask along if you go to any inside places. No problem.



Please plan on enjoying the **Fall ARS Convention** coming to you from **Vancouver Island, Canada:**

**Speakers from around the world!**

**Diverse and interesting topics!**

**Easy Access!**

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## The Blue Ridge Review

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### VIRTUAL FALL CONFERENCE ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

Our fall meeting will be the 2021 Virtual American Rhododendron Society Fall Conference, named *Fall Into Gardening*; it will be October 23<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. It will be hosted by the Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society and The Nanaimo Rhododendron Society, both on Vancouver Island, together with the Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association. The group that is running the conference is asking that individuals register so that they can use email to send participants relevant background information. You can register at <https://mailchi.mp/9151e79e2a98/fallconference-2021>

The conference will run for 4 hours on both Saturday and Sunday from 12pm to 4pm Eastern time. The speakers will each talk for 50 minutes. There is no fee involved.

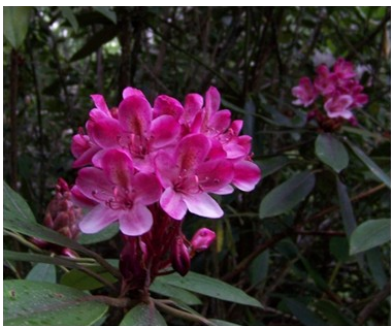
The first speaker will be Hartwig Schepker. Germany; he will be speaking from 12:10 pm until 1 pm (EDT) on Saturday, October, 23. He will talk about *Sichuan: A Plantsman's Paradise*. Dr. Schepker is the longtime director of the Botanic Garden and Rhododendron-Park in Bremen, Germany. This public garden has world's second largest rhododendron collection. Dr. Schepker is known as a resolute rhododendron explorer who has made many trips to North America, Europe, and especially Asia. He will give us background about an early British explorer of Sichuan, Ernest 'Chinese' Wilson, who, between 1899 and 1919, visited China 5 times and brought back to England over 1,000 garden plants, many of them rhododendrons. Dr. Schepker will talk about recent trips to Sechuan, following in the footsteps of Ernest Wilson.

Dr. Shannon Berch is currently an Emerita Researcher with the BC Ministry of Environment and an Adjunct Professor at UBC. She will educate us about 'soil biota', bacteria, fungi, and fauna that are part of the soil. (The definition of 'biota' is the animal and plant life of a particular region, habitat, or geological period). She will tell about detrimental biota, like root disease, and beneficial biota like fungi that have a symbiotic relationship with plants. Dr. Berch will give us ideas to help us use beneficial biota to make our gardens thrive. She will speak between 1:05 pm and 1:50 pm on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

David Sellars, an award-winning photographer and past-president of the British Columbia Alpine Garden Club, will give a presentation on how he and his wife Wendy developed their woodland and alpine garden. Tune in from 2 pm to 2:50 pm on Saturday, the 23<sup>rd</sup>. David will describe their initial focus on rhododendrons which expanded to an interest in other woodland plants and rock gardening. Their garden won the 2012 Millstream Garden Award from the North American Rock Garden Society.

We finally get to be entertained by Don Hyatt, who will give a presentation called "*Walk in the Woods*" from 3 to 3:50 on Saturday. We were supposed to have him as a speaker for our SE-ARS group in March of 2020, but like most events, the arrival of Covid in our world cancelled his talk. During his talk the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Don will update us on some his favorite native azaleas and rhododendrons that he visits during his frequent hikes in places like the Appalachian trail. He will tell us about progress trying to preserve rare plants such as 'Red Max', a solitary red form of *R. maximum*. (When looking for pictures on the web, you'll find that Jean and Leon Pace have one.) He will also tell us about a new lepidote species found in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. It's called *Rhododendron Smokianum*. Don's presentation will feature spectacular photography along with humorous tales of his plant-finding adventures.

On Sunday, at 12:10, David Millais of the UK will educate us about *Conservation of Heritage Rhododendrons*. He has a strong family background in studying and growing rhododendrons, and he is currently the specialist rhododendron grower for the family business, Millais Nurseries, the leading specialist rhododendron nursery in the UK, growing about 900 specialist rhododendrons which are sold throughout the UK. David's talk will remind us to be aware of conservation practices to preserve our beloved rhododendrons. He will discuss plant identification, labeling, record-keeping, data protection, conservation (cont. page 3)





### FABULOUS JULY PICNIC

This year's Southeastern Chapter ARS picnic was July 18. After a long hiatus brought about by the Covid19 pandemic, 24 members gathered at 2 PM for a covered dish picnic on the patio of the lovely home of Byron and Hazel Richards. Hazel blessed our meal with a special remembrance of our long-time Board member Doley Bell, who died on Christmas eve, 2020. A good meal was enjoyed by the twenty-six participants.



Following the meal, President Ray Head convened the meeting at 3 PM and introduced new members, Jonathan and Kay Hodges, and guests, Ray and Linda Palmer. Ray presented a slate of officers and Board members for the upcoming year. President Aaron Cook, Vice President Chuck Van Rens, Secretary Pamela McCarter, Treasurer Jackson McCarter, Blue Ridge Review Editor Judy Van

Rens, and three Board members (Ray Head, April Sanborn, and Leon Pace) were elected by unanimous voice vote.

Plants, many of them rare and even unique, had been provided by members; several from Doley Bell's and Leon Pace's collections and unusual cultivars hybridized by Ken Griffith were included. Buffy Wells, Hospitality Chairman, is a natural auctioneer. Her moves, her language, and her demeanor made us all feel like we were at a professional auction. Ray and Bob Head helped distribute the plants; Ray would explain the plant (sometimes asking Bob for clarifications) and then Buffy would push the price higher. The highest price was \$30, offered by Bob Head for a rhododendron hybridized the the Hagues. Bob said, "It's the best white in the area." The auction yielded a little over \$570.

### VIRTUAL FALL CONFERENCE (cont.)

policies in public collections, and restrictions to maintain the health of imported plant materials. He will discuss the role of Rhododendron Societies around the world in preserving valuable plants from extinction by identifying 'at risk' plants in order to encourage propagation and distribution for their preservation.

At 1:05 Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott will tell is about "*Landscape Mulches – The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly*". Our speaker is a professor of Horticulture at the University of Washington, and she has done extensive research on applied plant and soil science. She will advise us on choosing and applying mulches not only for weed control, but to reduce management costs by improving water and air movement, by moderating soil temperatures, by improving soil structure and nutrition, and by enhancing beneficial microbes and insects.

The meeting ended at 4



**Southeastern Chapter of  
American Rhododendron Society  
280 Trammell Rd.  
Travelers Rest, SC 29690**

WEBSITE - WWW.SE-ARS.ORG

**Officers and Directors**

(beginning July 16, 2021)

**President:** Aaron Cook

**Treasurer:** Jackson McCarter

**Vice President:** Chuck Van Rens

**Directors until 2022—**

John Kendall, Alan Mizeras,  
Buffy Wells

**Directors until 2023—**

Ray Head, Leon Pace, April  
Sanborn

**Secretary:** Pamela McCarter

**Editor:** Judy Van Rens

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**Mark your Calendar**

**Oct. 23,24—Virtual Fall  
Conference**

**12 pm to 4pm**

**Oct. 30—Clemson  
Botanical Garden,  
1 pm at Caboose**

**December—Possible Tour  
of Mountain  
Horticultural Research**

**February or March—  
SE-ARS meeting**

**Make Sure to Check Out the  
SE-ARS Website —  
[www.se-ars.org](http://www.se-ars.org)**

**VIRTUAL FALL CONFERENCE ( conclusion)**

Horticulturist Richard Dionne, from Quebec will talk to us from 2:00 to 2:50 about “Growing Rhododendrons in Quebec’s Harsh Winters”. He will use his many experiences while working as the specialized horticulturist at the “Jardin botanique de Montreal” to expand our knowledge of plant hardiness and cultivation requirements for growing rhododendrons in a cold climate.

The final presentation of this virtual convention will be from 3:00 to 3: 50 on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Don Wallace will entertain and enlighten us with his talk, “*Fragrant and Fancy – Bringing Fragrance into the Showiest Rhododendron Flowers*”. Our speaker is the owner of Singing Tree Gardens and Nursery, a small retail nursery in McKinleyville, California, which is on the coast in the northern part of the state. He’s been propagating, hybridizing, and growing rhododendrons from seed for the past 25 years. He’ll tell us about causes and desirability of fragrance in flowers. He’ll share information about different fragrant species and who discovered them. He’ll also give us ideas for producing new hybrids with fragrance, and colorful, showy flowers. He’ll give us examples of literature to discover which cultivars are the best parents for fragrant, showy flowers, and he’ll share his list of favorite fragrant rhododendrons that we can find today.

So, mark and clear your calendar, and register for this event. It promises to be a worthwhile weekend adventure.