

THE BLUE RIDGE REVIEW

Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society



Encouragement of the culture of Rhododendrons

August-September 2012

Colston Burrell at September Meeting! Companion Perennials for the Rhododendron Garden Sunday, September 16

We have a fantastic treat in store for our members for the September 16 meeting. Colston Burrell has agreed to come to Flat Rock and give a program on Companion Perennials for the Rhododendron and Azalea Garden. Please help us widely publicize this event, as he is well known and should draw a large audience. This is a great opportunity to bring guests who might result in some new SE-ARS memberships.



C. Colston Burrell is an acclaimed international lecturer, garden designer, award-winning author, photographer, naturalist, and teacher. He has shared his encyclopedic knowledge of plants and his respect for regional landscapes with audiences for 35 years.

Colston holds two master's degrees: one in horticulture and one in landscape architecture from the University of Minnesota. He is a lecturer in the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the University of Virginia and principal of Native Landscape Design and Restoration., which specializes in blending nature and culture through

artistic design. In 2008 Cole received the Award of Distinction from the Association of Professional Landscape Designers for his work in sustainable gardening. He is the author of many garden books and has twice won the American Horticulture Society book award, in 2007 with Judith Knott Tyler for *Hellebores: A Comprehensive Guide* and in 1998 for *A Gardener's Encyclopedia of Wildflowers*.

Colston is a contributing editor for *Horticulture* and frequently writes for *Landscape Architecture* and *American Gardener*. He lectures internationally on design, plants, and ecology. His writing reflects a love of plants, and he champions their use in artistically designed, environmentally friendly gardens.

After tending a city lot alive with birds and butterflies in Minneapolis, MN, he now gardens on 10 wild acres in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Charlottesville, Virginia, where he grows natives and the best plants of the global garden.

<http://www.greatgardenspeakers.com/listing/c-colston-burrell-4c13ca10b494c.html>

<http://www.linkedin.com/pub/c-colston-burrell/5/971/496>

The program will start at 2:00 PM at St. John in the Wilderness Parish Hall, Greenville Hwy., Flat Rock, NC. Bring friends and come early to network and welcome new folks who might join us as members.

43 Attend Annual Meeting, Picnic and Plant Sale on July 15

The Southeastern Chapter American Rhododendron Society's Annual Meeting picnic and plant sale at the St. John in the Wilderness Church Parish Hall celebrated our hosting a very successful 2012 joint



international convention in Asheville in May. Guests included members of the Vaseyi Chapter, ASA, and 3 or 4 others. Everyone enjoyed the BBQ from

the Flat Rock Wood Room, plus the scrumptious desserts our members are famous for!

President Jackson McCarter conducted a brief Annual Meeting during which April Sanborn, Jean Pace and Betty Becker, were elected to serve on the Board as Directors until 2014, and they took office immediately.

April Sanborn on behalf of the convention flower show committee, offered apologies that there wasn't a trophy for the Sweepstakes winner, so she presented the "Bugs Bunny Golden Baby Carrot Award" to Doley Bell. ☺



Capping the celebration, Jim Brant, from Gloucester, Virginia, drove 7 hours each way to personally thank all of us for "putting on a great show for the convention. It was among the best I've attended," he said.



Plants left from the convention were sold in the parking lot, with the 2" plants, 2 for \$1.00 and the 1 gal. plants, \$2.00 each. Jackson explained how to care for the plants.

Great Fall Event for October Meeting!

Hazel and Byron Richards are delighted to have us at their beautiful home and garden on Sunday, October 21. Their fantastic collection of beeches should just be starting to change color and their collection of dwarf conifers has national recognition! Jackson McCarter will bring 80 3 gal. rhododendron plants left over from the convention which will be used for P4M. "Just the visit to Richards' garden would be a treat for the chapter," he said. This event is for members only, so get your friends to join SE-ARS in September!

For our **Christmas Party**, December 2, we thought we'd try to start a new tradition, borrowed (or stolen) from the Eugene Chapter, ARS. You're all on the program, so start getting ready. "For the event's *pièce de résistance*, bring 10 to 12* pictures on a CD, DVD or memory stick (those not computer literate, have your pictures put on a CD, DVD or flash drive – we want to see YOUR pictures, too). Pictures can be of any subject – your garden, your acrobatic guppy, your Aunt Tilda, or your vacation. It's a lively fun event!

*Be aware, the limit is 12. NO MORE or you may be booed, hissed, ejected, despised, rejected OR all of the above."

2012 Silver Medal Award: James S. Brant

For over a decade, you have focused your determined leadership on projects to protect and enhance the value of exceptional groups of North American azalea species in the Southern Appalachian Highlands. Your efforts helped obtain an aerial photograph of Gregory Bald for use in future comparisons and a mower for restoration of that bald, with spectacular results. You coordinated groups of ARS members and others to protect special azaleas found on Hooper Bald from competing vegetation. You also organized planting of nearby Huckleberry Bald with seedlings of exceptional forms of native azalea species. You have taken the botanical exploration a step further into conservation and preservation of these fascinating plants and made them more accessible to future visitors. For your outstanding contributions, the American Rhododendron Society is pleased to present the Silver Medal to James S Brant.

May 5, 2012, Asheville, NC

ARS Web Site Has a Wealth of Information

Go to <http://www.rhododendron.org>, and check out all the great information for rhododendron enthusiasts. If you click on PLANT CARE, then Culture, you will see a 1995 article full of valuable advice about the care of rhododendrons and azaleas for both the novice and experienced gardener. It lists these topics: Botanical classifications, Use in landscape, Plant selection, Climate, Protection, Soil, Planting, Subsequent care, Fertilizing, Pruning & Dead Heading, Insect & disease control, Propagation, Transplanting. I picked this one topic to print. Pictures added are from other web sites found by Googling "rhododendron pests + images."

Insect and Disease Control

Local advice should also be sought for control of insects and diseases, as these vary around the country. A common insect pest in the warmer areas is the **lace bug** which works on the underside of the leaf. The tiny young nymphs move around on the underside of the leaf and suck the juices causing a yellowish spotting. If there are many insects, the whole leaf will turn yellow, then brown and drop. They may be controlled with an insecticide such as Malathion, Cygon or Orthene, used according to the manufacturer's directions.



Another widespread insect pest is the **root weevil**. This may be one of several different species. The damage done by the adults shows up as notches chewed in the edges of the leaves.



Greater damage, however, is done after the adult weevil lays eggs on the ground under the plant. The eggs hatch into **larvae** which feed on the roots and stem, often completely girdling (removing a ring of bark) and killing the plant. Control is

difficult because the adults move around freely, often laying eggs under plants on which they have not chewed. By the time root damage is noticed, it is too late to save the plant. Symptoms of a girdled plant are much the same as a dry plant, since the plant can no longer supply moisture from its roots to its top. The insecticide Orthene offers some control. Consult your local Extension Agent for other suggested insecticides.

In certain areas a **stem borer** may cause damage to azaleas and rhododendrons. The adult beetle, which usually appears in June, makes two girdles at the tip of the growing shoot about 1/2 inch apart and inserts an egg between the girdles. The larva bores downward, expelling frass from holes cut through the stem and pupates in the crown of the plant, just below the soil surface. The weakened stems are easily broken off and die. The girdled tips should be cut or broken off, as soon as observed, and destroyed. Be sure to cut low enough to eliminate the tiny borer whose threadlike brownish tunnel can be seen just below the girdles.



In some areas **aphids, mites, scale insects, thrips or leaf eating caterpillars** may cause some damage and may be controlled with a spray if they appear. Contact your Extension Agent for recommended chemicals, rates and timing of sprays.

There are several important diseases of azaleas and rhododendrons. They can usually be avoided if the following practices are observed:

- Purchase and plant healthy plants.
- Plant so that the plants have excellent drainage by planting high in well drained soil.
- Mulch to conserve water.
- Provide cold protection if needed and moisture when needed as well as nutrients based on a soil test.
- Prune out dead and dying stems and remove from the vicinity of the plant.

(Cont. on pg. 4)

(Cont. from pg. 3)

Where experience indicates the need, apply fungicides to prevent *Ovulinia* petal blight, fungus leaf spots and root rot or branch wilt.

Root rots that occur in some landscapes cannot be controlled once active in rhododendrons. Every effort should be made to prevent them from occurring. Fungicides like Subdue, Aliette and Truban are preventative fungicides. The treatment schedule will vary due to the difference in their systemic activity. Follow label instructions or consult your Extension Agent or Extension Plant Pathologist for assistance.



Phytophthora root rot damaged leaves



Petal blight occurs in the spring and early summer in the Southern, Southeastern and Middle Atlantic States. The fungicide Bayleton has provided the most satisfactory protection when applied to the flower buds as they begin to show color.

Die-back of azalea and rhododendron caused by the fungi *Phomopsis* and *Botryosphaeria* may be serious diseases. Protection from desiccating cold winter winds and adequate watering of the plants during prolonged dry periods helps to prevent these diseases. Any diseased or dead branches should be pruned out with pruning shears which have been dipped in 70% rubbing alcohol solution or 10% household bleach solution between cuts to avoid the spread of disease.

Powdery mildew caused by two different fungi occurs primarily on the leaves of certain hybrid deciduous azaleas. Usually the disease occurs late in the



summer. **Rust** diseases that attack the leaves of rhododendrons and deciduous azaleas appear as yellow pustules primarily on the lower side of the leaves. Usually, rust appears late in the summer and chemical control is probably not practical.



Additional information about diseases and pests is available at the following web sites:

Maintaining Healthy Rhododendrons and Azaleas in the Landscape (Ohio State University Extension), <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/3000/3043.html>, discusses common encountered problems and provides useful solutions.

Controlling Insects and Diseases on Azaleas and Rhododendrons (Alabama Extension Service), www.agrisk.umn.edu/cache/ARL01681.htm, good information on azalea diseases and pest problems.

Rhododendron Pest Management Calendar

Published by North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/calendars/note058.html>.

| PESTS | * | ** | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------------|-----|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| azalea stem borer | II | 1 | | | | S | | | | P | | | | |
| black vine weevil | I | 3 | | | G | | | | | S | | | | |
| climbing cutworms | III | 1 | | | S | | | | | | | | | |
| Japanese weevil | II | 1 or 2 | | | | | | | S | | | | | |
| lace bugs | II | 1 or 2 | | | | | | | S | | | | | |
| rhododendron borer | II | 1 | | | | S | | | | P | | | | |
| rhododendron tip midge | II | 2 | | | | S | | S | | | | | | |

* Degree of importance of pest: I=Important pest, high probability of occurrence, II=Treat as needed: III=Occasional pest, treat when detected.

** Number of applications needed for most effective control. It is usually best to wait 10 to 14 days between applications in cool weather and 7 to 10 days between applications in warm weather.

G=granular; P=prune out infested twigs or branches; S=Spray application.

Southeastern Chapter
**AMERICAN
 RHODODENDRON
 SOCIETY**
Membership Sign-up Form



Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State _____
 Zip _____
 Telephone _____
 E-mail _____

MEMBERSHIPS ARE ON A CALENDAR YEAR BASIS. 18 months for new members joining after April 1st. New _____ Renewal _____

Membership dues include chapter and national membership, plus the quarterly *ARS Journal*.

- Regular.....\$40.00
- Commercial.....90.00
- Sustaining.....75.00
- Sponsoring.....150.00
- Commit for Life (Individual).....1,000.00
- Commit for Life (Family).....1,500.00

Send this form with your check payable to "SE-ARS" to:

John Brown, SE-ARS Treas

Welcome! ...and Thank you for joining the...

**Southeastern Chapter
 AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY**

Commit for Life, Individual, is payable over a 3 year period in one increment of \$400 & two of \$300. Commit for Life, Family, is payable over a 3 year period in increments of \$500. ♥ Encourage a friend to join!

In Memorium

Edward Holman Smith, PhD,



died peacefully on June 23, at the age of 96. He had a BS in Agriculture-Entomology from The Clemson Agricultural College and Master's and Doctorate degrees in Entomology from Cornell University. He was an officer in World War II and retired from the US Army Reserve as a colonel.

Ed's entomological career began as an extension agent in New York State's Finger Lakes Region until he was named Chairman of the Entomology Department at North Carolina State University, in Raleigh, NC, in 1964. In the 1960s he testified against the excessive use of DDT at U.S. Senate hearings. He returned to Cornell University in 1967 to be NY State's Director of Cooperative Extension, through the 1970s. His career ended back at Cornell as chairman of the Entomology Department. His knowledge and expertise took him to Afghanistan, China, Kenya, Thailand, Peru, and

Malawi where he worked to improve the quality and quantity of their food production.

Ed and his wife, Janet, moved in 1998 from Ithaca, NY, to Asheville, for what he described their "late harvest" years. He served on the Board of Warren Wilson College and continued to write as the "elder statesman and historian" of the Entomological Society of America. He had a boundless love for and fascination with the natural world. Throughout his life he was a tireless advocate for the environment, instilling in his children, and extended family a love of and respect for nature.

"He was a SE-ARS member for quite a number of years and was also on the board of directors. He was our "bug" expert." *April Sanborn*

"He was a good person, also very quiet. He used to attend about all of our meetings, but we had not seen him for quite awhile now." *Don Johnson*

"He did a program for SE-ARS on insects and was always glad to share his knowledge about insects. He helped with the Truss Shows. He was very friendly and pleasant to talk to." *Jean Pace*

Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

Officers and Directors

President: Jackson McCarter **Treasurer:** John Brown

Vice President: Sieglinde Anderson **Secretary/Editor:** Marilyn Haynes

Past President: Doley Bell

Directors 'til 2013: Ray
Head, Glenn O'Sheal, Audrey
Stelloh

Directors 'til 2014: Betty Becker,
Jean Pace, April Sanborn



Membership Renewal Notices to be mailed in September

Our Treasurer, John Brown, wants to receive your dues for 2013 by the October meeting, in order to include you in the drawing for a free membership for 2014. Notices go to every current SE-ARS member, so if you won last year or joined after April 1, 2012, you don't need to pay up this time. If you didn't, please send your check to John or bring it to the September or October meeting.

Membership benefits include:

- Quarterly ARS Journal with valuable plant and Society information.
- Annual Conferences offering lectures, tours and networking.
- Visits to gardens and nurseries, both public and private.
- Discounts on reference books.
- An outstanding seed exchange program.
- Participation in local Chapter meetings.
- Plant and cutting auctions and sales.
- Involvement in local and national flower shows.
- Support of test and display gardens.

Mark Your Calendar, Now!

September 16, Sunday - 2:00 PM, "Companion Perennials for the Rhododendron and Azalea Garden," Colston Burrell, St. John in the Wilderness Parish Hall. Guests \$10.00.

October 21, Sunday - 2:00 PM, Meeting and P4M at Hazel and Byron Richards Conifer Garden, Hendersonville, NC.

December 2, Sunday - 2:00 PM. Christmas Party and Member Photo Sharing, St. John in the Wilderness Parish Hall

Deadline for the October Blue Ridge Review is September 16. September 16. September 16. September 16. Please send information, pictures.

If you're getting a printed copy of the *Blue Ridge Review*, you're missing some beautiful colors. For a **color** copy.