

The Blue Ridge Review

The Newsletter for the



SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER
The American Rhododendron Society
Hendersonville, North Carolina



September 2004

HUMANS, INSECTS, AND THE PLANET WE SHARE

September 19th at 2:00 PM Saint John in the Wilderness

Ever see one of those electron microscope photos of some armor plated behemoth and learn that he lives in your eyebrows? Yes, like it or not, they're everywhere, crawling, flying, occupying every conceivable ecological niche. Most of us are only interested in keeping them—or at least, the ones we can see—out of our houses, off our persons, and trying to protect our plants and vegetables from their voracious jaws. Of course, I love butterflies and know that bees pollinate plants, but other than that, I scarcely know the difference between friend and foe. At our next meeting, **Dr. Ed Smith** is going to bring the insect world into a clearer focus. He is certainly qualified; he was Professor of Entomology at Cornell until he retired and came back home. Ed was born in Abbeville, S.C., studied at Clemson, and went into the US

Infantry shortly after Pearl Harbor, serving until the end of the War in the European Theater. He credits the GI bill for helping him get his advanced degrees at Cornell, and except for a short stint at N C State, he spent his career there. He has grown rhododendrons in Ithaca and North Carolina and studied insects in both places. He says that what he learned in New York has little to do with conditions (and insects) here. Ed is not going to tell us what insecticides to use. Instead, he is going to help us understand how the insect kingdom intersects our own. Our practices and choices have consequences, many unintended, and he will help us think about how we can adapt them to best preserve this Eden we inhabit.

By Billy Joyner

ENCORE AZALEAS® BUDDY LEE "Guest Speaker"

September 20th at 7:00 PM Hendersonville Public Library Caplan Auditorium

The **Encore Azalea**® story originated with the dream of **Robert E. Lee** of Independence, Louisiana. His vision was to create a beautiful azalea whose blooms could be enjoyed more than once a year. In the early 1980's, Mr. Lee began a methodical breeding effort to achieve his goals by hybridizing beautiful, spring flowering varieties with a rare, summer blooming azalea. This resulted in thousands of different twice blooming azaleas. Each plant was then evaluated for flowering period and richness of color, as well as quality of foliage and overall vigor. The result of this lengthy process was the release of the first six Encore Azaleas. The genetic diversity within this group yielded a wide range of growth and color characteristics. These vary in size from small compact forms to large background plants in shades of pink, orange and lavender.

After they flower in the spring, the Encore Azaleas begin growing and new shoots appear. Then they suddenly stop

growing and start setting buds. By mid-summer they begin blooming again and may flower until the onset of cold weather.

Since the introduction of the first six Encore Azalea varieties, there have been fourteen additional varieties released. These new Encore Azalea varieties bring with them a greater selection of bloom color and plant size. The Encore Azalea family continues to grow. Mr. Lee is still working to develop a wider array of Encore Azalea varieties to enhance your color options.

Encore Azaleas® are marketed through Flowerwood Nursery in Loxley, Alabama, and are available at our local retail nurseries.

Mr. Lee is presently active in the development and testing of new plant varieties through Transcend Nursery.

Robert (Buddy) Lee is current president of the Azalea Society of America for 2003-2005.

Mystery Rhododendron *by Doley Bell*

Missing labels of great looking blooms are always a challenge in trying to get someone to identify. Rarely do you find out the name but part of the joy is sharing the bloom with others. In May 2003, Doley Bell found what he thought was an unusual flower and started looking for the hybrid name. Ed Collins was first approached and said he has never seen one like it. "Be careful," stated Ed, "I will bring my shovel because it is so unique and should be shared with others."

The plant is an epidote with a white center and red border. It is **hose and hose** which is a rare trait for a rhododendron. In May of 2004, pictures were taken and e-mailed to many people for the possible hybrid name.

Many SEARS members also said "Wow!" but no name. The picture sending expanded to Kathy VanVeen, Paul James, Harold Greer, Ken Cox, Rarefind Nursery, and even to the Netherlands with all saying it is a "Wow" and not a named hybrid. As best that can be determined at this point is that it is a seed grown plant by David Dean, former President of SEARS, from seed obtained from seed exchange of ARS. The "wow" folks are now suggesting that it be named and that it should be shared beyond the Bell garden. Doley and Melody will continue the research and may register and name the next bloom. Rhododendron 'Melody Bell' would be their choice.

To request a color photo, please e-mail Doley Bell at doleybell@yahoo.com and Doley will send you a picture.

The Prez Sez



Thirty Days

Thirty Days is a long time or almost no time at all. If you are in the 7th grade and its early May and you have 30 days until school is out, 30 days is forever. On the other hand, if you are our age and a bill is due, 30 days passes in a flash. This is especially true for the ones that don't show up on the same day every month, day-in, day-out. Insurance bills are a good example because they are sent out way before they are due and all of a sudden, you are late. I don't like them, anyway, because I don't think that I get anything for my money if the house doesn't burn down or the car isn't stolen. I have a better deal for you. I am talking about a bill (dues notice) that comes only once a year. It is sent out very early but you get your money's worth in Spades. This year, we will not only get our membership in the National and Chapter of the ARS, along with the benefits included, we are going to have a chance to win the Early Bird Prize. The winners of the prizes will be given an additional year of membership or a plant of equal or greater value. Every member who pays their dues within 30 days of the dues notice will have a chance to win.

The reason for having the drawing is not what it would seem to be. Let me explain because I have been involved in the process and understand the need. Every year the Treasurer and the Secretary spend a lot of time preparing the dues notices and stamping and sorting and mailing them to us.

Then they receive and record and check and wait and do it some more. Usually, the whole process hangs around until February which means even more work because the ARS purges its roles with the new year and that means taking members off the roles and putting them back on. That was a long sentence, and so is the work that these people do. That is the reason. We can reduce the volunteer labor that your Secretary and Treasurer go through by paying your dues in September and maybe even win a prize. Gosh, that is almost as good as school letting out. *John Brown*

We Are Having a Party

Come join your fellow members for a clean-up party at Augie Kehr's Memorial Garden September 10th.

When we established the garden, we told David Dethero that we would chip in to help on the maintenance. It is that time of year again. A number of volunteers did a great job in the spring, but we need to keep after the vines and weeds to make sure the garden looks great. Please come at 9 AM on Friday September 10th. A digging tool for weeds would help.

The more volunteers the quicker we get out of there, but in no event will we go past noon.

Thanks in advance!

Jim Holmes

Coming Soon...

Time is near for the fall bloomers sale. So get your requests in and count your money.

After all the gorgeous bloomers we saw last spring. Now is the time to put in your special orders for those you don't already have, or maybe they were so beautiful that you would like some more of the same. We can have them shipped for purchase at the October Plants for Members Sale. If you have any special requests, please contact Glenn O'Sheal by e-mail at rhodosheal@yahoo.com or you may call (864)-855-5068. If the Van Veen Nursery has them, we can order them to be sent when our plants are shipped for the sale. If not we can look into getting cuttings of these for next year's plant sale. If you request a particular plant and we can obtain a cutting, it is yours right off the top and will not be included in your picks at the sale. Therefore, you will get things you want up front and then choose more at the sale. The cost will be the same as for the sale.

Next years selections will be collected at the end of September and early October. If you will send me a list of things you'd like to have for next years sale we can collect cuttings that have been requested instead of something we pick. As a help to us, if you know of someone who has it I will ask for cuttings and then you get the same deal as above. These will be taken off the top and reserved just for you, and will not have anything to do with the lottery drawing at the sale. One suggestion: if you saw or see anything in the past show or next years show, write it down and who has it, then we can request that member donate cuttings to the Plants for Members Sale.

Many thanks to all of you for your help in making this a fun and easy task.

Glenn O'Sheal

April's Book Review

Insects and Gardens, by Eric Grissell

Insects and Gardens is an interesting book, written by a professional entomologist and amateur gardener. Grissell, a research entomologist with the U. S. Department of Agriculture, writes knowledgeably about the biology of insects commonly found in North American gardens. However, this is not the usual handbook on how to eliminate the insect "pests" from your garden. Rather, the author describes how insects play a key role in maintaining a garden's ecological balance. In various chapters he describes everything from the basics of insect development, their function in the garden, as well as the interactions between insects and plants, and each other. He goes on to suggest that it might be time for gardeners to get away from the "us and them" mentality so many have (and reliance upon chemicals to kill insects) and find more realistic ways to deal with the insects in our gardens. Grissell advocates that gardens should be managed as natural, biologically diverse systems, believing they are easier and in the long run more enjoyable to maintain. He concludes the book with a thought-provoking section on the relationship between insects and humans. The book is filled throughout with excellent, close-up photographs, which illustrate the text very well.

Insects and Gardens, listed at \$30.00, sells through the S.E. Chapter for \$24.00.



You may order a special book by contacting April Sanborn at (828) 586-8648 or e-mail her at asanborna@aol.com

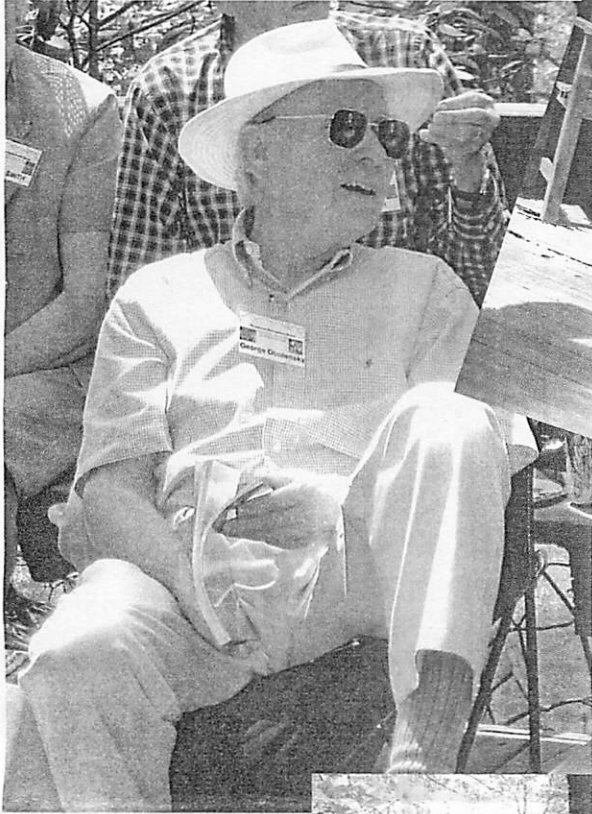


This image was magnified over 400 times by a scanning electron microscope. There are three mites in the picture.

Ed Smith- Insects and Mankind

Do you recognize these guys? Probably not as they cannot be detected with the human eye.. We live with millions of these mites on a daily basis causing health problems for nearly 15 percent of our population. We are surrounded with insects and mites, often unbeknown to many of us. It can be difficult to identify beneficial insects and/or pests when we are unaware of their presence. Be sure to join your fellow members to learn more at the September meeting. Discover who is friend or foe and how we can live peacefully together.

Looking Back



(Above)

Courtland and Cathie White won a beautiful rhododendron at our April meeting at Jackson and Pamela McCarter's residence..

(Above) George Obolensky was another winner at our April meeting. His prize was a Timber Press book on "Paths" (left) April's meeting on the deck.



April found members and guests exploring the McCarter's extensive gardens and propagating/nursery area. The meeting and lunch was held on the deck overlooking the vast garden. It was at the April meeting that a vote was taken and passed to reward two scholarships instead of one as we had two qualified students.

June was "Back to Basics" at Saint John in the Wilderness. Ed Collins gave an excellent slide presentation. Ed is an accomplished teacher and rhododendron authority. Later it was outside for hands on demonstrations by Wayne Hutchins and Don Johnson.



(Above) Jackson and Pamela McCarter both won the two door prizes at our June "Back to Basics" meeting.

Summer Picnic and Auction 2004

Another great picnic and auction were enjoyed in July. Many wonderful plants were auctioned for unbelievable bargain prices. The selection included some very special plants that are now in several fortunate member's gardens. We netted \$795.00 to be added to our scholarship fund.

The food was choice, as in the past. We have great chefs among our members and one is always delighted with the assortment of dishes prepared for the event.

The weather was perfect in the spacious shaded picnic area at the Bell's garden.



(Above) Members enjoying some good conversation after consuming some good food. It looks like Glenn O'Sheal is telling an interesting story!



(Above) Auctioneer John Brown is getting members to part with their money in exchange for some terrific plants! Helper Billy Joyner looks on.

(Right) Here he goes again, \$\$\$Bob, keeping track of the bids and bidders.

