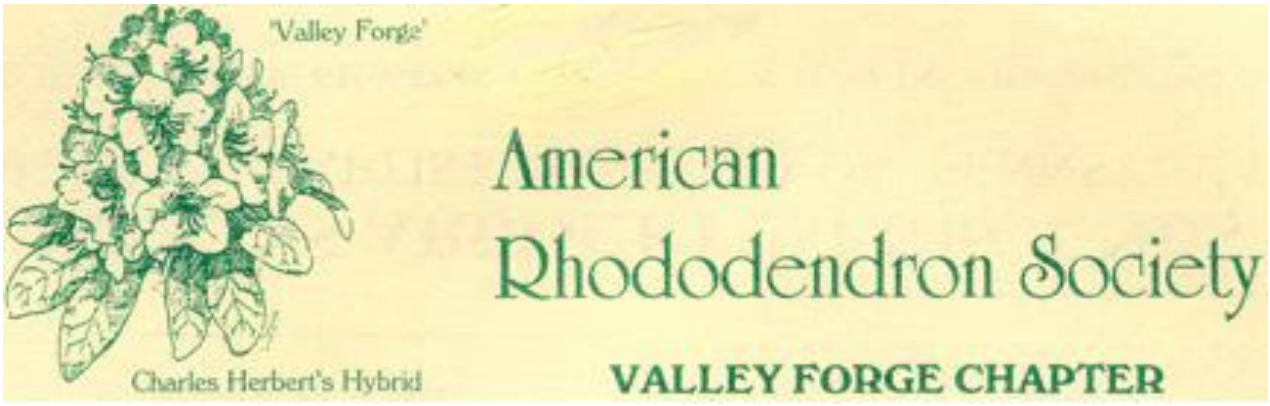


14 Northwoods Road, Radnor, PA 19087
Chapter's Website: www.ValleyForgeARS.org

NEWSLETTER *March / April 2021*

Unless specified otherwise, meetings are at Jenkins Arboretum in Devon

Calendar at a Glance

Mar. 25 (Thu.) @ 7 PM: Zoom Meeting, Tom Smarr, Executive Director of Jenkins Arboretum
Apr. 15 (Thu.) @ 7 PM: Zoom Meeting, Steve Wright, Jenkins Director of Horticulture/Curator

President's Message

I hope everyone has been able to stay safe and warm and is doing well. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are still haven't been able to meet live but on February 21st we still managed to meet via Zoom with the Greater Philadelphia Chapter for our annual joint meeting. This year, thanks to Ron Rabideau, President of the GP Chapter, we were thrilled to hear Steve Hootman of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden give a very interesting and informative presentation about his 2019 Rhododendron expedition to the mountains of China & North Vietnam.

On March 25th at 7:00 pm, we return to the more familiar environs of Jenkins Arboretum to hear Executive Director Tom Smarr talk via Zoom about the future of Jenkins Arboretum and the challenges of maintaining its beautiful and renowned plant collections.

On April 15th at 7:00 pm, Steve Wright, Director of Horticulture/Curator of Jenkins Arboretum and VF ARS Chapter Board Member, will discuss, also via Zoom, the exciting Native Rhododendron Germplasm Repository Project he and the Jenkins staff are working on. By the way, Steve's article on this important project was featured on the cover of the recent issue of the Azalea Society of America's journal "The Azalean." **Congratulations Steve!!!**

The March/April Newsletter is the traditional occasion in which we reach out and encourage members to lend a hand with our May Plant Sale. Unfortunately, because of the uncertain way things still are regarding the pandemic and the logistics and close working conditions involved in setting up and managing the sale, we decided not to schedule the Plant Sale again this year.

In closing, I would like to extend a hardy Congratulations to Kathy Woehl, VF ARS Chapter Board Member, for her wonderful photos that were displayed in the Winter 2021 JARS. Once again, Kathy was a finalist in the ARS Photo Contest and she always does a fabulous job representing the Valley Forge Chapter in the contest. **Congratulations Kathy!!!**

I would also like to extend our best wishes to Alice Horton, our Chapter Vice-President, as she continues to make excellent progress in her recovery. As always, Alice, we are thinking of you and wishing you well.

Hope everyone continues to stay safe as we all look forward to the Spring Season.

Sincerely,
Jerry O'Dell, (610) 608-2018,
westdell@verizon.net

VF ARS website: www.ValleyForgeARS.org

On March 25, 2021, (Thursday), Virtual Meeting at 7:00 pm

Speaker: Tom Smarr, Executive Director, Jenkins Arboretum

Program: Future of Jenkins: Maintaining the Collection through Future Change

Many of the members of VF-ARS have been involved with Jenkins for several years and have witnessed the collection grow both in diversity and maturity. As this wonderful garden celebrates 45 years of progressive growth, we are planning for new features and opportunities to engage visitors within and outside the gardens. Tom will talk about the site master plan process, not done since 1976, that will provide new ways to experience the landscape and gardens at Jenkins. He will also discuss how the staff worked to recover from significant storms during 2020 and the active visitation that was seen throughout COVID.

Tom Smarr has over two decades of experience working in ecological horticulture and public garden spaces. He has worked at small woodland gardens such as "Garden in the Woods" in Framingham, MA to internationally known parks such as the High Line in New York City. As the Executive Director at Jenkins, he is working to find new ways to connect the public to this wonderful treasured natural garden.

Login information will be provided in advance.

On April 15, 2021, (Thursday), Virtual Meeting at 7:00 pm:

Speaker: Steve Wright, Director of Horticulture/Curator of Plant Collections, Jenkins Arboretum

Program: Rare Finds and Exceptional Specimens: Preserving America's Finest Native Rhododendrons

Steve will talk about the exciting new curatorial initiative to develop a native rhododendron germplasm (genetics) repository at Jenkins Arboretum. He will discuss exactly what the Jenkins Staff is doing, how they are doing it, and why it is important. In addition, Steve will tell about the progress of this project and share stories and pictures of some of the highlights through the first year.

Steve got is BS in Agriculture Education at Delaware Valley University. Then he got his Masters in Forestry at LSU with a specialty in entomology. He came to Jenkins in 2011 and is the Director of Horticulture and Curator of Plant Collections at Jenkins. This means he oversees all horticultural operations at the Arboretum including curation, planting design, and garden maintenance. He provides guidance and instruction to horticultural staff to ensure best horticultural practices, plant propagation, and greenhouse and nursery management. Steve's main horticultural interests are native plants, plant/animal interactions, environmental stewardship, and of course rhododendrons and azaleas.

Free preregister for this zoom meeting is at: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rare-finds-and-exceptional-specimens-tickets-136967319941

Plant Labels are available for Chapter Members

In cooperation with Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens, plant labels are made for VF ARS members from January through March. If you have any questions, please contact Steve Wright (steve@jenkinsarboretum.org).

Eligibility:

Labels will be made **only** for members and only for their **own use**. The sequence of orders processed will give priority to active members.

Description:

The product is a permanent, laser-engraved, black anodized aluminum plant label. Each will measure ¾ inches wide by 3 inches long and will come with rounded corners and a pre-punched hole for hanging. Hanging wire is the responsibility of the member (small diameter bell wire is recommended).

Quantity:

120 labels maximum per order/member.

Cost:

$30.00 for 1 to 40 labels, $50 for 41 to 80 labels, and $70 for 81 to 120 labels. Checks should be made out to "Valley Forge Chapter, ARS", and the money will be passed on to Jenkins.

Instructions for submitting:

Create a document, preferably in Microsoft Word or similar program, that lists all plant tags to be made. Be sure to write the names *exactly* as you would like them to appear on the label – capitalization, spelling, quotes, etc. must be carefully reviewed before submission. Jenkins staff will review the document, recommend edits, and confirm those edits before any label-making will take place. For single-line labels, the list is simple. If double-line labels are desired, simply put the second line in parentheses.

Single Line Examples:

- R. mucronulatum
- R. x 'Hershey's Red'
- 'Koromo Shikibu'

Double Line Examples:

- R. fortunei ('Lushan')
- R. x 'PJM' (Weston Hybrid)
- 'Anna Kehr' (Kehr Hybrid)

Notes:

1) No line on a plant label can be longer than 26 characters (including spaces).

2) The format is yours, i.e., it may be 'P.J.M.' or just P.J.M. Plant names should not be abbreviated.

Checking label information:

After you have prepared your list (as outlined above), thoroughly check and recheck using your own resources. As mentioned earlier, the Jenkins staff will thoroughly review and offer suggested modifications, but it would be very helpful to have someone else give your list a check ahead of time. It cannot be emphasized enough how important it is to check the labels for accuracy as they cannot be corrected once engraved. Inaccuracies may pass on false information on numerous occasions (plant sales, flower/truss shows, cuttings exchanges, garden tours).

Engraving label information:

The final plant list should be emailed to Steve Wright at: steve@jenkinsarboretum.org, with 'metal plant labels' in the subject line.

Spotted Lanternfly Update

First discovered in 2014 in Berks County, PA, *Lycorma delicatula* has spread to more states including Delaware, Maryland. Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

This pest, which is not a true fly, is actually a planthopper, an insect with piercing-sucking mouth parts. Spotted lanternflies use stylets to penetrate plants such as grapevines, hops, fruit trees, and other woody trees and shrubs, then suck out the carbohydrate-rich sap of the plants, using this for their own nutrition.

They excrete a sugary residue, known as honeydew, which is colonized by sooty fungi. Plants are damaged by the loss of sap and the appearance of fruits and foliage is ruined.

Egg masses survive overwinter and hatch into nymphs which develop through several stages into adult winged insects.

Current Control Measures

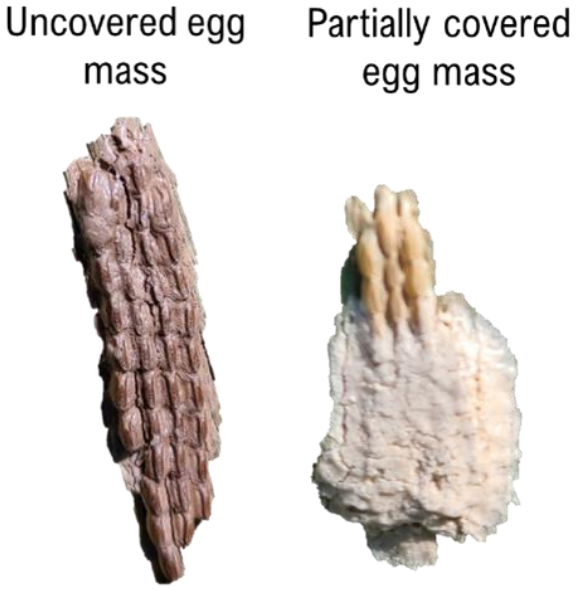
1. Remove Ailanthus Trees

The spotted lanternfly loves to lay its eggs on tree-of-heaven, *Ailanthus*. So, controlling this invasive tree in woodlands helps reduce the possibility of providing a haven for the invasive spotted lanternfly. Also, the Spotted Lanternfly requires the ailanthus altissima to reproduce. This tree is the spotted lanternfly's primary target. Because of this, the first step you should take to get rid of this pest is removing these trees from your property. This is a must for managing this pest!

The Most common technique is "hack & squirt." Cut notches into the bark and apply an herbicide. Concentrated roundup works but the pros have a stronger chemical.

2. Remove SLF Egg Masses

During the winter and early spring, it is a good idea to look for and destroy SLF egg masses. The best way is to scrape them into a bottle or plastic bag with rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer.



3. Add sticky band to trap nymphs

Nymphs and adults tend to fall out of trees and crawl back up. Hence, from May to September, a trap on the trunk will trap them before they can go up to feed. Be sure to guard against catching birds and squirrels by placing something like chicken wire over a sticky trap.

4. Chemical control

The best chemical control seems to be with systemic products. Since the major damage is done when SLF feed on plants, and systemic insecticides kill insects that feed on a plant, this provides a good level of protection. Contact sprays don't kill the SLF that are coming onto your property, but they do kill many beneficial insects. The pros have some very effective and long lasting systemic products in their arsenal now that kill the SLF and not beneficial insects.

Rhododendron of the Year Plant Awards: 2021

Mid-Atlantic Region

Twenty-nine rhododendrons selected for their adaptability in eight regions of the United States have been awarded Rhododendron of the Year (ROY) honors for 2021. The purpose of the awards is to educate the public about the wide range of rhododendrons that can be grown successfully in gardens. To be selected for a ROY award a plant must have excellent foliage and flowers, have an attractive plant habit, prove itself cold and heat hardy for the specific region and be pest and disease resistant.

For each region, the Plant Award Committee has chosen four plants - an elepidote and a lepidote rhododendron, a deciduous azalea and an evergreen azalea. A vireya rhododendron has been selected for the Hawaii/Southern California region. The awards for all years are posted at: 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004.

Rhododendrons of the Year for all 8 regions are announced in the JARS each year. Those selected for the Mid-Atlantic Region in 2021 are:

Elepidote Rhododendron: 'Jack Cowles'

Flower moderate yellowish pink at edges, shading to pale yellowish pink in center, unmarked in throat or on lobes, openly funnel-shaped, wavy-edges, 3½" across. Ball-shaped truss has 14 flowers. Blooms abundantly midseason, Calyx absent. Leaves oblong, mucronate at apex, 6" long, wavy edges, very glossy dark green above, hairless, held 2-3 years. Upright plant growth habit. Typical height: about 4 ft. in 10 years. Plant hardy to -15°F (-26°C) and bud hardy to -5°F (-21°C). Hybridized by Cowles. Although this plant is spectacular, it is difficult to root.

Deciduous Azalea: R. austrinum

Known variously as the Flame azalea, Florida azalea, or the Florida Flame azalea. Flower in shades of yellow, gold, and orange, narrowly funnel-shaped, very fragrant. Blooms early midseason. Leaves ovate or obovate to elliptic, up to 4" long, deciduous. Reaches up to 10 ft. in the wild, but will often remain smaller in the garden, with a spread about half its height. One of the easiest of the native azaleas to grow. Cold hardy to -15°F (-26°C). Very heat tolerant. Native species found in the Florida panhandle and nearby areas of Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi.

Lepidote Rhod.: 'Weston's Pink Diamond'

Flower light vivid purplish red with orange-brown spot on dorsal lobe, flat saucer-shaped, semi-double, wavy lobes, ruffled center of petaloid stamens, 1¼" across. Held in ball-shaped trusses with 8 to 12 flowers. An early season bloomer. Leaves lanceolate, acute apex, cuneate base, 1½" long, glossy, yellow-green, retained 1 year. Upright plant, well-branched, ⅔ as broad as high. Grows to an approximate height of 5 ft. in 10 years. Cold hardy to -10°F (-23°C). Hybridized by Mezitt.

Evergreen Azalea: 'Betty Ellen'

Flower purplish pink in bud, opening white inside with margins unevenly tinged light purplish pink, outside light purplish pink, broadly funnel-shaped, 3.2" across. Truss holds 3 flowers. Blooms abundantly, mid to late season. Leaves elliptic, acute apex, cuneate base, 2⅛" long, flat margins, moderate olive green. Intermediate plant habit. Grows to a typical height of about 3 ft. in 10 years. Plant and bud cold hardy to at least 0°F (-18°C). Hybridized by Stewart.

Previous Mid-Atlantic ROY Winners

Elepidote Rhod.:	**Lepidote Rhod.:**	**Evergreen Azaleas:**	**Deciduous Azaleas:**
2020: 'Bea MacDonald	2020: *R. keiskei var. keiskei*	2020: 'Wagner's White Spider	2020: *R. periclymenoides*
2019: 'Ken Janeck'	2019: 'Rhein's Luna'	2019: 'Treasure'	2019; *R. cumberlandense*
2018: 'A. Bedford'	2018: '24-Karat'	2018: 'Dreamsicle'	2018: *R. arborescens*
2017: 'Gilbert Myers'	2017: 'Blaney's blue '	2017: 'Ben Morrison'	2017: *R. canescens*
2016: *R. hyperythrum*	2016: *R. minus var. minus*	2016: 'Inch'	2016: *R. atlanticum*
2015: 'John C. White'	2015: 'Southland'	2015: 'Ashley Ruth'	2015: 'My Mary'
2014: 'Nestucca'	2014: 'Kehr's White Ruffles'	2014: 'Caitlin Marie'	2014: *R. calendulaceum*
2013: 'Taurus"	2013:'Cornell Pink'	2013: 'Rose Greeley'	2013: *R. schlippenbachii*
2012: 'Janet Blair'	2012: 'Windbeam'	2012: 'Sandra's Green Ice'	2012: 'Aromi Sunny-side-up'
2011: 'Brown Eyes'	2011: 'Molly Fordham'	2011: 'Tina's Whorled'	2011: *R. prunifolium*
2010: 'Scintillation'	2010: 'Mary Fleming'	2010: 'Carrie Amamda'	2010: 'Klondyke'
2009: 'Wheatley'	2009: 'Landmark'	2009: 'Koromo-shikibu'	2009: 'Old Gold'
2008: 'Mist Maiden'	2008: 'Weston's Aglo'	2008: 'Dream'	2008: 'White Lightning'
2007: 'Caroline'	2007: 'Olga Mezitt'	2007: 'Fairfax'	2007: (none)
2006: 'Bellringer'	2006: 'PJM Elite'	2006: 'Elsie Lee'	2006: 'Homebush'
2005: 'Calsap'	2005: 'Dora Amateis'	2005: 'Nancy of Robin Hill'	2005: 'Gibraltar'
2004: 'Gigi'	2004: 'April Pink'	2004: 'Girard's Fuchsia"	2004: 'Crimson Tide'

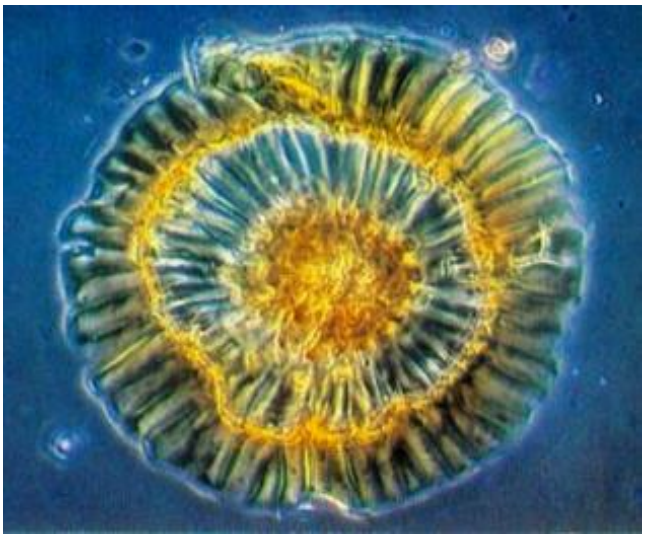
The Rhododendron Leaf - Lepidotes

Rhododendrons including azaleas are categorized by the structure of their leaf. Those having scales including vireyas are called lepidotes, and those without scales including azaleas are called elepidotes.

Most of us recognize the lepidotes as usually being smaller plants and having small, more azalea-like leaves while the elepidotes are usually larger plants and have larger leaves, including some with very large leaves. Here is where it gets messy. Though azaleas are smaller plants and have smaller leaves, they are all elepidotes. However, most of us recognize azaleas when we see them and usually don't mean to include azaleas when we say elepidotes. On the other hand, vireya rhododendrons are all lepidotes which is to be expected since they are smaller plants with smaller leaves. However, we typically don't mean to include vireyas when we say lepidotes.

Are you trying to tell me this plant has scales and that is good?!?!

Botanists characterize lepidote rhododendrons by the presence of glandular leaf scales on various parts of the plant, mostly on the undersides of leaves. In this context scale means part of a leaf pore or stomata, and not the pesty scale insect. But what are these leaf scales that botanists talk about? I can truthfully say I have never seen one of these glandular leaf scales to know what it was. So, I went searching for pictures and I found pictures in a 1983 JARS article entitled "The Rhododendron Leaf Scale" by Clifford Desch, Jr. But the pictures were all taken with microscopes and were of structures 10 mils in diameter (.01 inches). That is about 4 times the size of a human hair, or about the size of the period at the end of this sentence. Scales are more obvious when they are dark, but sometimes they are green and blend in with the leaf. Here is what a scale on *R. carolinianum* looks like with a microscope from the top on the scale and in cross section on the right.



Top view of a rhododendron leaf scale at 300x

Cross-section view of the leaf scale at 300x. It reminds me of a glass compote dish (below).

These glandular leaf scales are not to be confused with stomata which are the pores in the undersurface of a leaf through which oxygen, carbon dioxide, and water pass. J. M. Cowan wrote a book on rhododendrons leaves in 1950: "The Rhododendron Leaf." Cowan illustrated the book with drawings showing a wide variety of leaf appendages including scales. Besides scales, other appendages include indumentum which is hair like growth and tomentum which is a waxy growth. Leaf appendages such as scale, indumentum and tomentum are called trichomes.

The ability of dense coatings of glandular leaf scales to assist in the regulation of water in leaves can enhance the ability of lepidotes to survive in severe climates. PJM is a good example of a very hardy lepidote. One lepidote, *R. edgeworthii*, has both scales and hairs or indumentum. The indumentum obscures the scales so *R. edgeworthii* is often mistaken for an elepidote. Indumentum is more common on elepidotes.

Technically, the scales are glandular hairs with a complex structure. They consist of a very short stalk surrounded by a multicellular head. This is usually surrounded by a rim made up of radially arranged cells. Below are illustrations of five different types of glandular leaf scales commonly observed on rhododendrons. Each of these types of scales is unique to a different group of rhododendrons. Botanists use these miniscule features to identify and help make sense of the relationships between the approximately 1,000 rhododendron species.

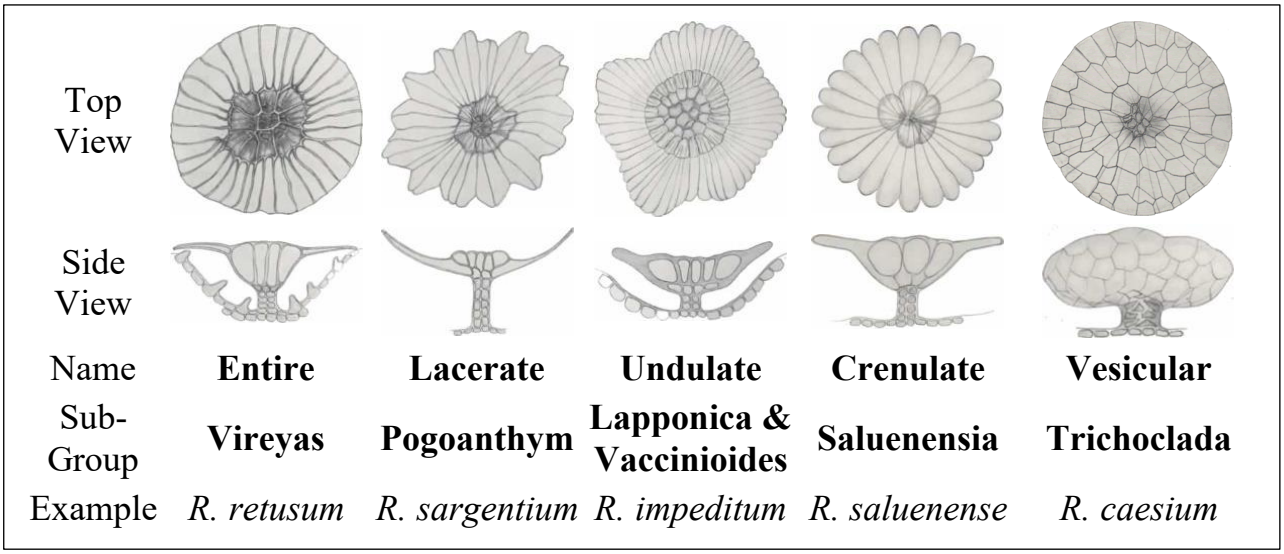
Researchers have shown that some glandular leaf scales on rhododendron leaves contain an oil which prevents black vine weevils from chewing on the leaves. In studies they found that the greater the occurrence of scales was on a rhododendron's leaf, the less weevil damage it would sustain. Further research found that chemicals called terpenes were secreted from glandular leaf scales. It is these terpenes that protect the leaf from weevil damage.

But these terpenes that glandular leaf scales secrete have another function. They are secreted more in the spring and on some plants tend to form a varnish like coating over the under surface of the leaf protecting it from desiccation in the summer.

Some glandular leaf scales are able to not only help regulate the secretion of water, but they take an active role in absorbing water into the plant. Absorption seems to be primarily through the cell wall. So, the scale structures complement the stomata in releasing moisture but are also able to absorb moisture.

[by Steve Henning, editor]

Drawings of Lepidote Leaf Scales by Cowan in *The Rhododendron Leaf*

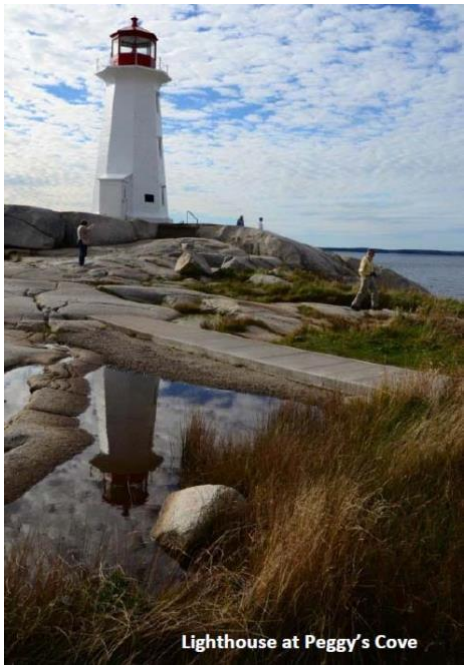


ARS 2021 Virtual and Live Convention

Rhodos Down East: Exploring the North Atlantic Region

June 3-6, 2021

The 2021 ARS Convention will be held in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, from June 3-6, 2021. Many people may still face travel restrictions due to the pandemic, so the organizers are planning an option to participate via video conferencing. Virtual registration will open January 15 and for a fee of $60 US ($80 Canadian), people will be able to participate remotely, hear the many outstanding speakers and go on garden tours virtually.


Lighthouse at Peggy's Cove

Take advantage of an exciting opportunity to learn about growing, breeding and gardening with rhododendrons. Due to the travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 American Rhododendron Society Convention will be offering all the presentations, garden tours and networking opportunities available on line, to anyone who can access the internet! For those who can travel to Nova Scotia (novascotia.ca/coronavirus.travel) there will also be an in-person sessions and garden tours as well as a plant sale featuring rare and unusual rhododendrons propagated especially for this event.

Speakers include Ken Cox, famed Scottish rhododendron breeder from Glendoick Nursery in Scotland; Joe Bruso, rhododendron breeder from Massachusetts; and Todd Boland from Newfoundland's Memorial University Botanical Garden. The Convention will start with the program, "Introduction to Mi'kma'ki" by Gerald Gloade, a Mi'kmaw naturalist and educator who will tell the stories of the first people that explain the natural history since the area was covered by ice. Garden tours, both virtual and in-person, will include the Kentville Research Centre, Annapolis Valley Historic Gardens and Peggy's Cove barrens as well as private gardens. Networking opportunities will include the Breeder's Roundtable where you can hear about the latest trends in rhododendron breeding, and the ARS Next Generation Project which will show how to involve the next generation in your local ARS club. Those attending in-person can enjoy social events that feature the seafood, cider and wine from our local producers.

Registration for the virtual convention will open January 15! Registration for the in-person convention will open on February 15, if permitted by Public Health restrictions.

Registration Information and Fees

Virtual registration opens January 15, 2021.
Late virtual registration fee starts April 1, 2021
Registration Closes May 1, 2021

Virtual Convention Registration Fee:

$60 US / $80 Canadian before April 1, 2021.

$75 US / $100 Canadian after April 1, 2021

In-Person Registration Opens February 15, 2021, if permitted by Public Health restrictions.

ARS Convention 2021 Fee:

$190 Canadian (incl. convention fee, Thur. reception/ Fri. dinner/Sunday, plant sale, workshops and lunch) before April 1.

Late Fee $210 Canadian after April 1

Tours prices in Canadian dollars:

Friday bus tour to Annapolis Royal gardens	$80
Saturday bus tour to Peggy's Cove barrens	$80
Saturday evening Lobster banquet	$75

Steve Henning, editor
103 Acer Place
Lancaster, PA 17601

NEWSLETTER

March / April 2021

In This Issue

ARS websites:

rhododendron.org ARSStore.org

ARSOffice.org https://ars75.org/

Use http://arsstore.org/

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Vice President:	Alice Horton	(610) 430-0196
Treasurer:	Bob Smetana	(610) 688-5249
Secretary:	vacant	

Directors:

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Erin Van Yahres	('20-'23)	(610) 644-2806
Steve Wright	('19-'22)	(267) 481-0175
Darlene Henning	('19-'22)	(717) 735-7116
Perc Moser	('18-'21)	(610) 525-3651
Kathy Woehl	('18-'21)	(610) 688 9173

Membership:	Darlene Henning	(717) 735-7116
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Plant Sale:	Alice Horton	(610) 430-0196
Plants-for-Members	with Greater Philadelphia Chapter	
Truss Show (VF):	Debby Schmidt	(610) 388-8573
Webmaster:	Steve Henning	(717) 735-7116

VF Chapter's web site: ValleyForgeARS.org

Please contact us with email changes or if you receive this newsletter by letter carrier rather than email, even though you have e-mail. Please inform Steve Henning of any changes (rhodyman@earthlink.net).