

VIREYA VINE

ISSUE #64, FEBRUARY 2002

PUBLISHED BY THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE RHODODENDRON SPECIES
FOUNDATION

R.S.F. PO BOX 3798, FEDERAL WAY, WA. 98063
E. White Smith, Editor

The Vireya Vine is financed by its subscribers. The only things you pay for are printing and postage. Fran Rutherford and I and my wife Lucie, do the work for the love of it. We do not have an annual subscription fee. Your mailing label will have a year date on it, which is the last time you contributed to the Vine. We welcome your contributions. You can use your credit card to make payments to the RSF for the Vine.

We print this list because we think people are interested in who is getting the VV and growing the plants. We say Washington State so that you do not confuse it with the US capital.

New subscribers or recent contributors since issue #59 are:.

Peter Adams	California	Niel Puddey	Australia
Roger Beck	Hawaii	Eldean Rempel	Washington State
Walter Brooks	Washington State	George Ryan	Washington State
Robert Cairns	New Zealand	Don Selcer	California
Dick Cavender	Oregon	Graham Snell	Australia
Peter Cox	Scotland	John Spring	California
David Dewinter	Hawaii	Ray Steele	England
CJ Downes	New Zealand	Richie Steffen	Washington State
Don Dulac	California	Dean Stout	Oregon
Lurline Elliott	California	Hideo Suzuki	Japan
David Fluharty	Virginia	Marjorie Thomas	California
RL Frasier	Texas	Charles Trommer	Hawaii
Bill Greer	Oregon	Eric Weiss	California
Kennith Gross	New York	Bob Withers	Australia
Heinz Kratz	Germany		
Kyong Lee	California		
Ralph Love	California		
Mitch Mitchell	Hawaii		
Jan & Brian Oldham	New Zealand		

People must like the Vine. Over half of these people sent in more than \$10US. Some quite a bit more. Thanks, friends.

OK. It has been a while since we have published a VV and that is because we had nothing to print. I do the best I can, but it is not my job to write seven pages of text four times a year. I am more than pleased to type your letters into the Vine but I have to have the letters first.

O sure, there are things going on out there in the Vireya world, like. Ralph Love is building a new home up the hill from Carmel, California and John Kenyon in New Zealand has a wonderful new Vireya catalog crammed full of color photos and descriptions (cost \$5NZ and probably plus postage overseas). What is going on at Strybing Arboretum in San Francisco (Nan)? Is our old friend Hugh Caldwell still growing Vireyas in Florida? What is Dick Chaikin doing besides playing golf in Florida? Don Dulac has been contributing to the Vine since 1985, what are you doing Don? Bill Greer in Portland, Oregon was just in Bovees a week ago getting potting mix. Wonder what he is getting potted now? Bill Jenkins in Los Angeles was growing Vireyas on his concrete driveway years ago. I know Bill can write because he is the Editor of the Southern Californian Chapter newsletter. Chip Lima has been taking care of Peter Sullivan's wonderful church garden in San Francisco (wonder if it is still there?). I bet we would like to hear about the new Vireya structure at Pukeiti from Graham Smith and how the Vireyas are doing. John Rouse, Clyde Smith, Ruth Funder, Graham Snell, Lyn Craven, Ivan Menzies, Bob Withers and Brian Clancy in Australia, have been getting the VV since at least 1985. They might have something to say. Sylvia Saperstein up in New South Wales has a great Vireya article in the new issue of 'The Rhododendron' the Journal of the Australian Rhododendron Society, as does Brian Clancy. Glen Jamieson in Canada probably has the best species collection in that country. Bet he can also write letters. Chris Fairweather holds the UK, National Collection of Vireya hybrids. He has written a Rhodie book. And what is going on in Germany - Hartwig Schepker, Heinz Kratz, Erhard Moser, Ulrich Spies and Martin Montholer? Richard Currie has a great collection in Auckland, NZ and has promised a letter. Lindsay Davis and his wife Sue from NZ should have something to say. They have been getting the Vine since 1986 (hope it isn't just because they like to read my writing). Met Paul Smith from the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, last October in New Plymouth NZ. How is the Edinburgh collection doing, Paul? Lucie and I are going to the Rhododendron Conference in Edinburgh this May to check the Vireya collection. If you are interested, contact Dr. George Argent at E-mail gargent@rbge.org.uk. I hear they have 200 + registered.

Peter Cox is a great writer and we sure would like thank him for telling us about how Vireyas are doing in Scotland. Peter and Kenneth Cox's book 'The Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species' is now out in it's second printing (get it from the RSF). This is IT. There is nothing else like it and probably never ever be a better book. It only covers the mainland Asia Vireyas, but any Rhodie lover needs this book. This book is on the par with David Leach's book 'Rhododendrons of the World'. Great Job, Peter and Ken.

Well that is enough picking on people. We know all of these people so they probably won't mind being prodded a bit.

HERE IS A DEAL. Write a letter to the Vine and I will move your "last contribution" date up two years. I must be getting desperate!!!

E. White, Editor

From Peter Cox

Perth, Scotland

Dear VV,

December 2001

It was very nice to see coloured illustrations in the last VV, especially *R. santapau*, which we introduced in 1965 from India. I hope to be able to get back to Arunachi Pradesh next year after an interval of 37 years. Kenneth has just returned from there where he had a reasonably successful into the New Territory, but the only *Vireya* he found was the ubiquitous *R. vaccinioides*.

We are gradually building up our *Vireya* collection and improving their health. I long to have a special house for them but their popularity at present does not warrant one. It seems ridiculous to have to go to Pukeiti in New Zealand or the Rhododendron Species Foundation for *Vireya* species with the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, so close, but owing to CITES agreements, they are very reluctant to allow much out from their great collection. We were given a plant of *R. [unclear]* which is in grave danger in the wild and needs distributing in cultivation to save it from possible extinction. I am sure many other species are rapidly disappearing in the wild. So far we find that species sell better here at Glendoick than do hybrids. It is very noticeable in Australia and New Zealand, that where they can be grown outside or with just a roof overhead, the hybrids are more easy to grow and are much more popular.

I really do not see *Vireyas* ever being real popular again here as they are not suitable as houseplants unless they are given artificial light. While the *maddenia* group will tolerate very low light levels for up to a month or more indoors, *Vireyas* will start dropping their leaves in 2 or 3 days. Our winter light levels are much lower than most other places where people grow *Vireyas*.

Peter Cox

Glendoick Gardens

Glencarse, Perth PH2 7NS

Scotland

www.glendoick.com

Anyone interested in helping form , or becoming a member of, a South Florida Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society can contact.

Robert Batts

9855 Westview Drive

Coral Springs, FL 33076

E-mail battsra@home.com

From Lucie Sorensen-Smith
Dear Vireya Vine,

Portland, Oregon
January 2002

Do you lucky people in New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii and elsewhere wonder how those of us in rainy, dark (in the winter) Portland, Oregon can possibly grow successfully and bloom vireyas? Not only that - - - in the summer we have very little rain (usually on three-day weekends like Memorial Day, Fourth of July & Labor Day) and often low humidity, 20 – 30%. Temperatures in high 70's, 80's and 90's, but always cool at night.

To reassure you that vireyas are alive and happy in this unlikely place, I cruised the greenhouse on January 26, 2002 and came up with the following list of approximately 80 different plants in bloom. We would especially like to know which ones on this list were blooming in the Southern Hemisphere in January, our winter – your summer.

New Zealand/Australian named hybrids

Blushing Belle
Carillon Bells
Cinnamon Pink
Coral Flare
Cordial Orange
Dawn Chorus
Goldilocks
Ivory Coast
Jean Baptiste
Just Peachy
Larissa
Little Kisses
Lollipop
Luralie
NZ yellow, lost name
Raspberry Trifle
Sweet Wendy
Spanish Fire
Tango Time
Toff

U.S. named hybrids (mostly)

Aravir
Arne Jensen
Baram Bay (NZ Karuna)
Bernadette
Cristo Rey
Flamingo Bay
Hansa Bay
Lake Toba

Lucie Sorensen
Mount Pire
Milne Bay
Princess Alexandra
Queensland
Lake Amaru
Saint Valentine
Sandpiper
Sunny's Brother
Terebinthia
Tropic Alpine Brilliant
Tropic Alpine Ruby
gracilentum x commonae,
lochiae x culminicolum,
aurigeranum x laetum,
(Dr. H. Sleumer x herzogii) x (laetum x zoelleri)
aurigeranum x zoelleri,
konorii x laetum, selfed, Rouse
laetum hybrid,
macgregoriae x fallicinum,
(zoelleri I.S. x lochiae) x (laetum x zoelleri),
saxifragoides hybrid,
plus some laetum-zoelleri-aurigeranum hybrids from an Australian cross.
Pink Creeper x laetum,
a pastel yellow-from Bill Moynier (lost name)

Some have been in flower for a month or more and were nearly finished. Others are re-blooming after a brief rest of a few weeks or a month, and two have had flowers for nearly 12 months.

They spend the winter months in a glass greenhouse and two plastic houses, with natural gas heaters set to come on at 38 degrees F, (3.3C). We use fans at the ceiling to direct the warmer air down to the ground, a tip we picked up from an article by Frank Doleshy which is in our book 'Vireya Rhododendrons, An Anthology of Articles from ARS Journals'.

Twenty five species were blooming, although sharp eyes and optimism are necessary to find the tiny flowers on caliginis and euonymifolium which blend in with the foliage. Carringtoniae; celebicum, pink form; caliginis; commonae; christiana; laetum Black & Wood; macgregoriae; loranthiflorum; goodenoughii; javanicum ssp. javanicum; gracilentum; euonymifolium; jasminiflorum var. punctatum; kochii; pauciflorum; konorii; rarum; retusum; phaeochitum; rhodopus (we have been calling it pubitubum in error); stenophyllum; womersleyi; wrightianum var. cyclopense; zoelleri (hybrid?); and rubineiflorum x gracilentum.

Several have provided flowers nearly all year ----- rarum, pauciflorum, gracilentum, womersleyi, of the little ones, and it seems as if laetum B&W is ever present. Its large golden truss, flushed with pale orange at the beginning, is simply spectacular. We are not certain of its background-----

Jim Gerdemanns wonderful 'Tropic Alpine Brilliant', 'Tropic Alpine Ruby' and gracilentum x commonae were blooming outside the greenhouse when I took my survey. The next night the temperature dropped to 28F (-2.2C). The flowers were still there, not quite as shiny and firm, and lasted a few more days before dropping, but more buds are opening and the plants look fine. (On January 28 these same plants had 3 inches of snow fall over them and they are still just fine outside)

Low light levels, and reduced hours (7-1/2 to 8 hours) have not apparently had a negative effect on production of bloom, although I suppose we could have had even more flowers. Instead, it seems to me that the age of the plant is an important factor. Older plants are usually reliable bloomers. Taking better care of the plants seems to help, also. For the past 3 years my grandson, Colin, has been potting, watering and fertilizing on nearly every Saturday and the plants look much better than when under my "survival" regime. "Benign neglect" should not be taken too far!

Here is a new/old idea for you to think about -----

VIREYA VINE ---- GROWERS FORUM

Most Vireya growers, Southern and Northern hemispheres, both commercial and hobbyist, are small operations. The Vireya world isn't exactly flooded with "how-to" articles, studies, reports, etc., either. That is why exchanges of information and experiences have been so much help in advancing the relatively "young" field of vireya culture, in contrast to orchid culture.

Most of what we (E.White and I) have learned about vireyas has come from, 1—listening to other people, and 2—observation and personal experience. We are still listening, observing, and trying new things. This Forum could be a way for all of us to share what we have tried, what works, and even what doesn't work! Many of your letters have done this but without the back-and-forth responses that can be so helpful. Some of this is being done on the internet, but there is still a need for the printed word.

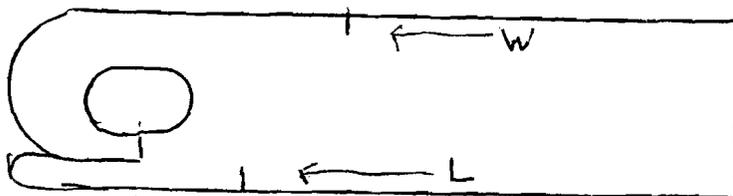
Here are some possible subjects to toss back and forth

- 1- Keeping track of vireya bloom information
- 2- Propagation methods and results
- 3- Pruning, for both young and older plants, and both outside planted, and potted plants.
- 4- Techniques for insect/disease control
- 5- Pot culture, mix, size and type of plants, fertilizer (what and when), watering, light, etc.
- 6- Whatever else concerns and interests you.

Have you ever wanted to keep track of when and how often your vireyas bloom? Many years ago at an American Rhododendron Society Convention held in Carmel, California, I remember Bill Moynier giving a talk on the bloom sequences of his vireya collection, and how impressed I was. This information can be helpful if you need to write descriptions for a catalog or an article or to up-date your records. Our friend, Jan Oldham, in Auckland NZ, likes to plan her landscape designs, using vireyas that are usually in bloom at the same time and look beautiful together.

Many times over the past 25 years I have tried and failed to maintain a system. A computer program would be great but first you need to gather the information to put into the computer. Now at last, something seems to be working! For the past two years a volunteer friend and I have been cruising our greenhouse and two plastic houses on the first and the fifteenth of every month. We attach a new tag or write on a previously attached tag (see illustration). We use an "Ebony" pencil and this is the info we record.

- Plant ID#
- Date
- Number of trusses
- Number of flowers in truss
- Number of lobes
- Color description
- Fragrance? Comments



On the back is room to mark the length of corolla and width of lobes, with no need to search for a ruler.

These labels slip over a branch easily and are not heavy. When we run out of room we just add another tag.

For a person like me, who has good intentions but an affinity for chaos, this has proven to be very workable. Do you have similar problems, and maybe a different solution? Let us know what you think of the growers Forum idea.

Lucie Sorensen-Smith
 The Bovees Nursery
 1737 SW Coronado
 Portland, Oregon 97219
 E-mail bovees@teleport.com

If we all had a computer and used E-mail it would be easy to get information around like Lucie says. BUT we all don't have one. Maybe that is why the Vireya Vine is not available on the Internet, besides I think that it is useful to know who reads the Vine. So we still need to print the Vine. The Azalea Society of America has a very good discussion group on the Internet. (Editor)

Some interesting Internet sites www.vireya.net

Some interesting Internet sites www.vireya.net
www.groups.yahoo.com/group/vireya, www.tropicalgardner.com

The Bovees Nursery (Lucie Sorensen-Smith)
1737 SW Coronado (E. White Smith)
Portland, OR 97219 USA
(503)-244-9341 or 1-800-435-9250
E-mail - bovees@teleport.com www.bovees.com
Catalogue is \$2.00 (Mail Order)

Glendoick Gardens (Kenneth & Peter Cox)
Glendoick, Perth Mail Order
Scotland, U.K. PH2 7NS www.glendoick.com
Phone Nursery 073 886 205

D. & P.J. Brown
Vernon Road www.homepages.ihug.co.nz/~brownnz
Te Puna, Tauranga E-mail brownz@actrix.co.nz
New Zealand

Mark Jury
Tikorangi, RD 43 E-mail jury@xtra.co.nz
Waitara, North Taranaki
New Zealand

Vireya Valley Nursery
Woori-Yallock Road
Cockatoo, Victoria 3781
Australia

Neil & Kathryn Puddey Nursery
PO Box 126, Woolgoolga, NSW
Australia E-mail puddy@bigpond.com

VIREYA NURSERIES

Rhododendron Species Foundation
PO Box 3798 www.rhodiegarden.org
Federal Way, WA 98063 USA
(253)-838-4646 Mail Order E-mail rsf@halcyon.com

Christopher Fairweather
The Garden Centre, High Street
Beaulieu, Hampshire www.website.lineone/fairweather.com
England SO42 7YR E-mail plantdoc@martex.co.uk
web Site www.glendoick.com

Te Puna Cottage Gardens (John Kenyon)
Te Puna Road, RD6 E-mail TePuna.Cott.Gdns@xtra.co.nz
Tauranga, New Zealand web site at www.vireya.co.nz
Mail Order NZ only Phone (07)552-5756

Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust
Carrington Rd. RD4
New Plymouth E-mail pukeiti@pukeiti.org.nz
New Zealand web site at www.pukeiti.org.nz

The Vireya Venue
2 Clifford Street
Maleny, Queensland 4552
Australia

Pacific Island Nursery (Sherla Bertelmann & Richard Marques)
P. O. Box 1953 E-mail tropical@greensand.net
Keaau, HI 96749 (808)966-9225
www.pacificislandnursery.com
They also handle the Vireya seed exchange. WorldWide.

VIREYA VINE
RHODODENDRON SPECIES FOUNDATION
P . O . BOX 3798
FEDERAL WAY, WASHINGTON 98063
U . S . A .