



VIREYA VINE

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RHODODENDRON SPECIES FOUNDATION

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E. White Smith, Editor

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Vireya Vine in conjunction with District #5 of the American Rhododendron Society (California Chapters) is planning a meeting/get-to-gether in Hawaii for early 1997. The meeting will be on the big island of "Hawaii" in the village of Volcano. We have set the date of January 29th for arriving, January 30 & 31st and February 1st for meetings and tours. Volcano is located about 30 miles from the city of Hilo where an airport is located, so people will need to rent cars to get there. It also is at nearly 4,000 feet and is only a few miles from "Hawaii Volcanoes National Park", which we plan to visit. We will have education talks, slide shows, roundtable talks, and garden tours. Housing will be at "Bed and Breakfast" in Volcano which has about 25 of them. You probably should also plan a vacation tour of the island while you are there. George Argent from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh is going to be there with us.

WE DO NEED TO KNOW WHO IS GOING TO SHOW UP. Please write me or call and I will send you more information.

E. White Smith, VV Editor

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Tacoma, WA 98406 USA Tacoma Phone Number (206)752-1625

Portland Phone Number (Bovees Nursery) (503)244-9341 Daytime

Or After 8PM PST (503)335-3824 You can also call Barbara Campbell in California at (510)524-8143. Or in Hawaii, call Mitch Mitchell at (808)967-7209

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From John Kenyon

Tauranga, New Zealand

Dear VV,

September 1996

What is this Vireya bug? I have been growing Vireyas for a good many years and recently I have begun to look back to see where I've come from. I am also looking forward to see if I can figure out where I may end up at if the Vireya disease continues. I really do think it will continue.

It all began with the sighting of a spectacular, bright, orange and yellow flower which looked a little different. At the time I grew tomatoes and I was sure it wasn't a tomato.

The plant I had seen was purchased and soon there were several. The scope was limited then, but I knew that what I was looking for were Vireya rhododendrons. If it had loud colours, was big and scented and was possibly just a little bit different I wanted it. My range was limited by these factors for years. If I purchased a plant, I just wasn't interested in any others that were similar.

I must add at this point that I sell plants for a living so this also effected my choices. The next step in maturity was learning to appreciate that sometimes plants similar to existing plants can actually be commercially superior. I also found that it is hard to dispose of a variety you have grown for years because there is a new kid in town. Now I realized that my commercial side was fighting with my plant loving nostalgia side, Scary stuff!

At this point, to add to the pain, it dawned on me that some of those tiny flowers with unremarkable features started to look more interesting. But why? This was answered by seeing Vireyas growing in the wild which I recommend to anyone remotely interested in Vireyas. Why? Because you see the plants for what they are and not for what you think should be done to them. Sure, hybrids have bigger flowers, more flowers, are more adaptable, and have remarkable repeat flowering capabilities, etc. but they lack that special quality that only species have. With out lots of species and as many forms of each that can be collected for the future gene pool, the possibly be limited for new hybrid forms. This is very clear as I often see different forms in the same species. It is also clear that the positive identification of species is difficult at the least. But we should strive to collect and save as many as possible. Many people don't understand that species plants are where it all starts. There would be no good hybrids without species to start out with in the beginning.

Some Vireya people may not understand what I am saying but I'm sure many of you will. Believe me, this Vireya passion can consume professional growers too.

As for the future, well, it's clearly in collecting these tricky species and building on the tiny collections of limited species forms. Luckily a few people have already started this collecting and only now do I appreciate their efforts.

John Kenyon

Te Puna Cottage Gardens

245 Te Puna Road RD 6

Tauranga

New Zealand

Phone 07-552-5756

NEW SPECIES -----Our good friends in Australia have been keeping your editor up to date about a new Vireya species, native to Australia called R. notiale. Lyn Craven and Bob Withers have written this species up and it has been printed in the Edinburgh Journal of Botany 53 (1): 27-37 (1996). I will not even try to explain the new species on these pages except to say that it is related to R. lochiaie. The major differences between the two species, and the most obvious, are the curved vs. straight corolla tube and the clustered vs. dispersed anthers. R. lochiaie has a straight corolla and its anthers are dispersed around the throat of the flower. R. notiale has a curved corolla and the anthers are clustered in the upper part of the flower throat.

Go take a look at your blooming "lochiae" and see which one you have. I have looked at mine and at one plant blooming at the Species Foundation and they were R. lochiaie. But, there should be some R. notiale around because many plants have been grown from seed by people over the years. Lyn Craven has also written a "Proposal to conserve the name R. lochiaie." The need to conserve the name came about when they looked at the original R. lochiaie holotype (Mt. Bellenden Ker, "1887") and found it to be the curved corolla type. Under normal circumstances when mistakes like this are found we get a name change. Our lochiaies would become notiale and visa versa. Because R. lochiaie is so well known, so widely grown and has been used in so many hybrids, Lyn is asking that the name R. lochiaie be retained for the straight corolla species. Good job, guys. Two species rhododendrons are now native to Australia. If any of you growers need more information about the difference between these two species, I will publish more later.

From Keith Adams

New Plymouth, New Zealand

Dear Vireya Vine,

August 1996

On May 1st of this year I met up with John Farbarik, of Silverdale, Washington, USA, in the capital of Sulawesi (Celebes Islands), Ujung Pandang to do a bit of plant hunting. I had visited Sulawesi briefly in 1992 and sussed out a few likely places for Vireyas. With little time and only the barest smattering of Indonesian, I didn't do any plant hunting. After meeting John in Washington State last year I discovered that his wife, Maiko, was from Sulawesi and that he had lived in Indonesia for a number of years. John also knows some of the language. So with his contacts and knowledge we decided to meet up on May 1st and see what we could find.

Our first object was Gunong (Mt.) Lompot Botan, 8,000 feet high and reached from the small town of Malino, a few hours drive in a mini bus from Ujung Pandang. The bus ride was over the narrowest, biggest pot-holed road I have ever been on, and I have been on some "beauts." We signed in the next day at the police post and caught a bemo to somewhere near the foot of the mountain. Bemos are the standard form of local transport anywhere in the East - they are about the size of a Ford Escort van with a bench seat on either side. If you can't get in at least 16 or 17 people you don't consider you've got a load. Anyhow, we got off at the nearest road point and started walking through fields and past some houses, asking all the way if we were on the right track. We got vague waves and "Oh yeah - over that way." We passed one small field where men were hoeing the soil, and one man came over and offered to guide us. We negotiated a sum of 40,000 rupiah, and off we went on what turned out to be an abortive hike. We certainly needed that guide, but it was a long hard tramp to get anyway near the summit through dense jungle. It started to rain steadily about half way up and got so bad that we could hardly see in front of ourselves. We finally had to give it away only a few hundred feet from the top, and it is only in that last stretch where the jungle thins and you expect to see Rhododendrons.

We got ourselves back to Ujung Pandang and after a day's drying out caught a bus to Tana Toraja in the central highlands where I had been in 1992. We stayed in the small town of Rantepao and essayed a climb on Gunong Sesean at 6,000 feet which is not too difficult. We immediately struck gold when I saw a small plant beside the track which I thought perhaps could be *R. javanicum*. However, further up the mountain we passed some young people who were coming down and one of the girls had in her hand a white salver-shaped flower with leaves the same as the plant we had previously seen. So - not *R. javanicum* but very likely *R. pubitubum*. We decided to do a traverse at this altitude, not far from the summit, at about 5,700 feet. We were rewarded by finding several more plants of *R. pubitubum* (?), so we collected several small seedlings and some ½ ripe seed capsules. Growing in association on the banks of a small pond were two other species. One only plant of *R. quadrasianum* var. *cuneifolium* (we think) and a small treelet up to 12 feet, twiggy with smallish elliptic leaves and tubular flowers sized at about 15mm. The treelet had pinkish orange flowers with 5 to 10 florets per truss.

This species was quite nice and was the only one we ever saw which had a completely ripe seed capsule, all ready to go. This was duly collected along with several small seedlings. This plant could be either *R. pudorinum* or *zollingeri* - Dr. Sleumer's description fits either. There was no seed or flowers on *quadrasiatum*, so we collected cuttings from the only plant we saw and hoped for the best.

We got back to Ujang Pandang as soon as we could and John posted cuttings and seedlings back to the USA. I have seen them at Bovees Nursery in Oregon and they seem to be OK. Time will tell. As soon as we could we were off to the northern part of Sulawesi and the main city of Manado, where John's wife came from. Our object here was Gunong Klabat, 8,000 feet, and not too far from Manado. It also was easy to reach by bus. The mountain itself is not easy, however, but John made it to the top and collected seedlings of a red tubular-flowered thing which can only be *R. celebicum*. This is the only *Vireya* I have seen with a bulbous underground stem from which the roots appear. When the indefatigable E. White Smith received John's consignment of this species, he made cuttings of the top part of the seedlings and they also seem to be OK.

None of this stuff can be positively identified until we grow them on and flower them. I have sent herbarium material to George Argent at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, Scotland, and with a bit of luck he may identify it for us. Identification might well be in my mail box when I get home in mid November from an extended visit to the Eastern United States.

One place we didn't get to was the Latimodjong Range in S.W. Celebes. We had a look at our maps, talked with people who knew how to get there, and we knew it would take us two days in a bus to just get to a starting off place. With a high point of 10,000 feet, and from my past experience I knew it would take several more days to break free of the jungle and find any *Rhododendrons*. And then you need to be lucky to get ripe seed. As we all know, when *Vireya* seed is ripe and ready to go - it simply does that, so there is never any seed left in the capsule. So unless you've got a helicopter and a millionaire as backing, you would have the devil's own job of getting live material in decent shape back to civilization to mail home. I've no doubt somebody will do it some day and I sure wish them good luck.

Keith Adams
Redwoods, 12A Sequoia Grove
New Plymouth
New Zealand

Great job, John and Keith. If anyone thinks collecting in the wild is easy then they have never tried it. Keith told me that the mountains of Sulawesi are the most difficult he has ever tried. Remember, Keith has been plant hunting in Northern Borneo many times and has been to places that very few westerners have ever gotten too. Keith left out the best part though. As they were crossing a rice paddy and walking along a mud dike, in heavy rain, Keith tripped on something and fell into the paddy mud. After extracting himself he then found a big water hole, stripped down and had a cold water bath. Some native ladies happened by and thought he was a real funny sight.

Rhododendron Species Foundation Plant Sale List as of December 1996

Please Note: This is not an order form. If you are interested in any of these plants please contact the RSF. This list is printed so that our readers will know what is available from the RSF. If you are interested in other species not listed you should make it known to the staff. To a degree at least, the people propagating Vireyas do not know what growers are interested in. Let them know. Or better yet, let all growers know what you want so that they can grow it or procure it for you.

LIMITED LIST

Any member may order from the Limited List EXCEPT 'STUDENT MEMBERS' AND 'ASSOCIATE GROUP MEMBERS'. Student and Associate Group members may order from the Open List only. All members and the general public may order from the Limited List after January 1, 1997.

Qty. Accession Number and Species Name - Price

	87/037	armitii	18.00
	78/101	christianae	9.00
	85/029	christianae	9.00
	78/103	gracilentum	18.00
	78/089	javanicum	20.00
	85/043	leptanthum	12.00
	87/042	leptanthum	14.00
	89/006	maius	20.00
	83/070	orbiculatum	15.00
	85/042	solitarium	13.00

OPEN LIST

Any member may order from the Open List. Associate members must submit their orders as a group, one order per group. The general public may order from the Open List after January 1, 1997.

Qty. Accession Number and Species Name Price

	78/104	aurigeranum	11.50
	85/049	carringtoniae	8.00
	87/040	carringtoniae	8.00
	82/208	christianae	9.00
	85/019	dielsianum	9.00
	83/053	goodenoughii	9.50
	87/045	praetervisum	11.00
	89/004	herzogii	11.00
	89/008	herzogii	11.00
	78/102	jasminiflorum	9.50
	80/144	laetum	12.00
	79/029	lochiae	14.00
	83/058	loranthiflorum	11.00
	78/099	loranthiflorum	11.00
	85/021	macgregoriae	10.00

The Rhododendron Species Foundation does ship plants outside of the USA. But it can be expensive. There will be a charge of about \$29US for a Phyto certificate plus air mail cost. Plants are bare rooted (washed clean). You will need to send your Government Permits along with orders and complete directions about how you want shipping done.

I have been out plant hunting again so I must tell you a little bit about it. My new wife (Lucie Sorensen-Smith) and I have just spent the month of November in Australia and New Zealand. We were only in Australia for parts of four days but had a good look at the Australian Rhododendron Society's garden at Olinda near Melbourne. They have planted many Vireyas outside in the garden and the plants look happy. Some of the plants even have the look of growing "in the wild." Our good friends, Ralph and Lillian Sangster, performed airport duty and drove us around. Jack Wilson and his wife spent a day with us and took us to see his collection and also to see Dr. Bob Withers, Brian Clancy and his daughter Geraldine who also has a Vireya nursery. Wow. These people are some of the champions of the Vireya world, having worked for a great many years with these plants. We also spent some time with my old friends Arnold, Elizabeth and Don Teese. The Teeses don't grow Vireyas but they grow just about everything else that is rare or unusual. Because time is always short when you are traveling, we missed seeing many friends, but maybe next time. On the way to the Melbourne airport the Sangsters stopped at Ruth Funder's garden. Ruth's garden is small but a person could spend a day in it discovering wonderful plants (Vireyas).

We spent the rest of the month on the northern half of the North Island of New Zealand. Please understand, even though both Lucie and I are Vireya nuts, we did spend some of our time doing tourist things in NZ. Brian and Jan Oldham picked us up at the Auckland NZ airport. Jan has a Vireya selling and garden design business in Auckland. They also have wonderful large plants and new hybrid crosses coming along. The Oldham's took us to see Jan Velvin at her Lyndale Nursery. She grows liners and has many Vireyas in production. She was in America last year and spent some time at Bovees with us so it was good seeing Jan again. We also visited Eden Garden in Auckland where many Vireyas were planted and blooming. If it hadn't been for the Vireyas in flower there would not have been much color in the garden at this time of the year.

We rented a car and drove down the east coast to Tauranga where John and Merrill Kenyon have a retail garden center/nursery. John sells lots of Vireyas and is serious about having good plants and new varieties. He spent a week with us in Tacoma and Portland last August. From John's place, we visited with David Binney who is really into species Vireyas. In the same area are David and Pauline Brown who grow Vireyas for both retail and wholesale use. Kenyon took us to the Rotorua area where we spent an afternoon with my old friend, Bill Robinson, at his nursery. Bill doesn't grow Vireyas any more but sold a lot of them in the past so he gets my vote as a Vireya Nut anyway. While we were way up in the northern part of the country we stopped in and had a nice visit with Michael Cullinane and his wife, Mary Lynn. They are caring for a large Avocado orchard and have planted a large collection of Vireyas along the orchard and in their landscape. We dropped in and saw Oz Blumhardt at his nursery near Whangarei. Oz is one of the early collector - hybridizer - growers in NZ. He has collected plants in the wild and has introduced many wonderful hybrids to the world.

We ended this trip in the New Plymouth area on the west coast. Our good friend, Keith Adams, put us up and drove us around. (When Keith arrived in Portland, Oregon on August 1st of this year, Lucie and I took him for a week over to her property in central Oregon (camping out). Keith saw some very different looking country and loved all of the high desert plants.) Near New Plymouth we spend a few hours with Mark Jury at his nursery. Mark has some exciting hybrids coming along and has planted a great number of plants out into the ground under the big pine trees. We also said hello to Felix Jury, Mark's father. Felix was a very early explorer (1958) for Vireyas and introduced many species from the wild areas of Papua New Guinea.

One of the joys of going to New Zealand is the chance to visit Pukeiti. The Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust Garden is located just a hop, skip and a jump east of New Plymouth on a hill side. They really can grow any Rhododendron there. The Vireya collection is very well done but might be overshadowed by the other plants at Pukeiti, such as the huge "big leaves" in the Grande and Falconeri groups that were sited many years ago in shallow valleys filled with the native bush and tree ferns. They have large beds with new and old hardy hybrids, plus large plantings of species and hybrids of the Maddenii group with their large flowers and wonderful scent. Everything at Pukeiti is lush and well cared for. I have heard that they get about 200 inches of rain per year and I feel lucky to have been able to visit Pukeiti on six different days, over the years, without being rained on.

A personal plea from your editor to all of you out there in Vireya Land!!! I need your input in order to keep this newsletter going. Your contribution doesn't need to be a "work of art" - just a paragraph or two on what you are doing. We want to hear about both your successes and your failures; How you use your Vireya collection - planted outside - a greenhouse - sunporch - window sill, etc; What plants are hard or easy to grow and how about your climate variations? My well tends to run dry and right now it is very low, so how about sending some letters. I believe that much more is learned from mistakes or failures than from success. The Vireya Vine is a learning tool, I hope.

Late breaking seed news from the Species Foundation. Collected from their stock plants.

R. javanicum OP (open pollinated), laetum OP, leptanthum OP, loranthiflorum OP, lochiaie OP & HP (hand pollinated), macgregoriae OP, phaeochitum HP, phaeopeplum OP, suaveolens OP, superbum OP & HP, zoelleri OP. Please send your seed order directly to the RSF.

Cost \$1.00 for OP \$2.00 for HP for members of the RSF and \$1.00 extra each for non members.

Also, if you want seed from the American Rhododendron Society "Vireya Seed Exchange", contact Bill Moyles, 4243 Norton Ave., Oakland, CA 94602 Phone 510-531-1375 or

Fax to Bill 510-531-9657 Bill loves to get faxes. or E Mail: wmoyles@hooked.net. No charge for ARS Vireya seed to people outside of the USA. But you must let Bill know in order to be on his mailing list. Please also send him Vireya seed. Make a few hand pollinations for old Bill.

VIREYA NURSERIES

The Bovees Nursery (Lucie Sorensen)
1737 SW Coronado
Portland, OR 97219 USA
Phone (503)-244-9341 or 1-800-435-9250
Catalogue is \$2.00 (Mail Order)

Cape Cod Vireyas (Dick Chaikin)
405 Jones Rd.
Falmouth MA 02540 USA
Phone (508)548-2233 leave a message (Mail Order)

Red's Rhodies (Dick Cavender)
15920 SW Oberst Lane
Sherwood, OR 97140 (Mail Order)
Phone (503)625-6331 USA

Te Puna Cottage Gardens (John Kenyon)
Te Puna Road, RD6
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Don't forget the Hawaii meeting and please let us know very soon if you plan to attend.

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