

VIREYA VINE

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SPECIES BOTANICAL GARDEN

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

From Mitch Mitchell Jr.
Dear VV,

Volcano, Hawaii
October 1995

When I was getting started trying to grow Rhododendrons here in Hawaii, back in the 1980s, I wrote to the Vireya Vine more often. Believe me, I couldn't be more grateful for the help that so many of you Viners gave me.

I suppose that one reason for my silence might be my impression that most of you grow Vireyas as inside plants because of the temperatures where you live. When I finally got it through my head that I was swimming upstream by trying to grow hardy plants in this area, I took E. White's advice and began to grow Vireyas and Maddenii's. I live at 4,000 feet, rainfall between 175 & 225 inches per year, acid woodland soil, and temperatures in the winter that drop to the mid thirties at night. Before going on I'll bet some of you are wondering why I couldn't succeed with hardies after reading about the above growing conditions. Well, a friend kindly reminded me that while the night temperatures were just right the problem was the increase to the 70's and 80's during many daytime hours. My nature makes it difficult for me to get rid of plants that are still alive. I still have about 20 hardy ones in the ground. R. Vulcan is about 10 feet high and about that wide and for the last two years it has had quite a few trusses, but not like what I have seen on our visits to the mainland.

As I said, my nature makes it difficult for me to dispose of plant material, and my Vireya collection is growing to the point where frequent pruning is necessary. My solution, believe it or not, is to use the pruned material as ground cover. It started as an experiment by sticking broken branches into the ground beneath the parent plant where they quickly grew. So I tried in a more deliberate manner and I have had a few failures. We live in a rain forest with scores of giant tree fern's. The fern's shade plus the humusy soil's moisture seems quite to the liking of Vireya cuttings. I must say, however, that it still gives me quite a start to see blooms appearing on a cutting not more than 4 inches above the ground.

My solution is probably going to grow into another problem as the plants get larger. At present I am trying to give them to people who express an interest in growing them. Hopefully enough people will become what Dick Chaikin calls Vireyaholics so that some day we might be able to form a Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society here in Hawaii. By the time that day arrives I'll probably be long gone and it will be a project for others to deal with.

I should add that many of us here in Hawaii are concerned that too many of our native species are disappearing. This was the subject of a recent National Geographic report. Some of my friends wonder about my interest in what they call exotic aliens.

I am happy to go about carrying water on both shoulders - enjoying Vireyas and Maddeniis while taking a very real interest in our native plants and birds. One of these birds is the *iiwa* for which our street is named.

Here is my email computer address: iiwi@aloha.net

R. A. Mitchell, Jr.

PO Box 298

Volcano, Hawaii 96785

Oct. 12 1995 Norman Cruttwell, who now lives in England, spent many years in Papa New Guinea. He worked with Vireya Rhododendrons and established a Botanical Preserve there. Norman also commented that he could just stick branches into the ground and that they would grow. I wonder how that garden in PNG is doing since Norman left a couple of years ago?

How about Mitch's 175 to 225 inches of rain a year. And people call the Pacific Northwest of America wet. A friend up on the west coast of Vancouver Island, Canada, uses a very fine screen over his cutting beds instead of plastic like the rest of us. He also gets a great deal of rain and the screen must break up the rain drops into a fine spray/mist and also allow good air movement

October 30, 1995 It is with a sad heart that I must report that Norman Cruttwell passed away on October 21st, 1995, near London England. It has been reported that his papers are being given to the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew. In Norman's honor, the following letter to the Vine was the very first one from him and was published in Vireya Vine #3. I did not know Norman well, but had met him several times at the 1988 Rhododendron Meeting in Wollongong Australia. As the Editor of the Vine I have gotten many letters from him and felt very special to be included on his Christmas card list. At the Wollongong meeting I sat across from Norman and one of his Australian friends on a bus tour and had a great time listening to them talk about their exploits "in the wild." Hopefully someone who knew him well can write about his extensive plant work in PNG. Rest In Peace, Norman, I will sure miss you. EWS

From Rev. Canon N. Cruttwell
Dear Vireya Vine,

Papua New Guinea
December, 27 1982

I was delighted to get a copy of the Vireya Vine - a delightful and original title, though I have yet to see a climbing Vireya Rhododendron. Judy Young of Seattle put me in touch. I sent her an article on the Rhododendrons of Mt. Gahavisuka recently for the Species Foundation Bulletin.

I left the Daga (New Guinea) in 1976 and moved to Goroka where I was the Rector until I retired early this year. Since then I have been creating a new Environmental Botanic Garden at Mt. Gahavisuka. I got my MA PA degree at Oxford in Botany - a first class honoris degree. I suppose you could call me trained, although I have not pursued a botanical career, until now. I have been a bush missionary for 30 years, and a Rector for 3 years. Now I am "honorary assistant" to the parish. Because we have no full time Rector as yet, I am still doing perhaps 50% of the Parish work.

Up till now I have had no funds for the Botanic Garden, only my (native level) salary. But in 1983, I am hoping that the Provincial Government will come up with some funds. I have applied to the Stanley Smith Horticultural Foundation for assistance, but have not had any reply yet. The access road is built to the Garden but only to rough 4WD vehicle requirements. We hope to continue to upgrade the road in 1983/84. At present I am planning, collecting and cataloging the native flora (15 varieties - species, hybrids or varieties) of Vireya Rhododendron and a very nice orchid flora. Not to mention all kinds of other plants.

Two species of Rhododendron are, as yet, unidentified. A beautiful Solenovireya with curved tubular corollas, pink in the tube, with white lobes, and scented. Also a reddish, shiny leafed shrub with bright rose pink, straight tubular flowers. There is a delightful salmon pink hybrid of R. macgregoriae and dielsianum.

Rev. Canon Norman Cruttwell
P.O. Box 961, Goroka, EHP
Papua New Guinea Latitude 6° 2'S

From Don Ashley
Dear Vireya Vine,

Villanova Pennsylvania
October 1995

Recently I visited my daughter at Vanderbilt University and spent several days in Nashville, Tennessee visiting some of the local sights.

When touring the large conservatory at the Oberyland Hotel, I was pleasantly surprised to find several magnificent Vireyas prominently displayed and surrounded by astonished onlookers. Imagine the glow I had when I gave them a quick lesson on Vireyas and their attributes.

Donald F. Ashley
1655 Mt. Pleasant Rd.
Villanova, PA 19085
Phone (610)527-4683

From Terry Nyman
Dear VV,

Kalama, Washington
October 28, 1995

I always enjoy getting the Vine. That was great that you printed the seed distribution list. I sent Bill Moyles a letter with my order today.

This is the time of the year to put the garden away. Tomorrow I must finish stuffing my treasures into the greenhouse and get ready for the freezing weather when it comes.

I live in Southwest Washington State on an east facing hill along the Colombia River. Kalama is an old town built on a hillside. The terrain is stony and little cliffs abound. We live on a wooded acre in the city limits and our house rests on a rock bluff. I have garden areas here and there among the woods. The trees are deciduous which encourages wild flowers. On this rocky site, protected by trees, I grow border line plants for this area. The first frost can come in the first week of November.

The Vireyas spend their summers in the shade by a pond, and their winters in a cool greenhouse under lights.

I accepted an early retirement offer a couple of years ago and felt that I had arrived. I loved being retired, but fate was not kind. My husband has lung cancer and I have gone back to work to more fully fund my retirement. I work by day at my job, and I'm the nurse at night.

I was looking forward to getting up to the Rhododendron Species Foundation and doing some volunteering with my friend Ginny Koken. Well, there is always tomorrow.

Marie Nyman
581 Geranium St.
Kalama, WA 98625
(360)673-4840

Sure Terry. We do what we can and life goes on. Nobody said it would be easy. Your garden sounds wonderful. I will try to stop and see you some day. After I had typed in the information and the letter from Norman Cruttwell I had to stop and think for a while. My wife Marlene, who passed away in 1994 just loved reading Norman's letters to the Vine and his Christmas cards. In fact she really helped me decipher his hand writing. She loved all of the letters from Vireya lovers that I get from all over the world. From talking to so many of you Viners, I also know that you love the Vine. That keeps me going and hoping for more letters from you all.

From Reg Pohlmann

Dovon, England

Dear Vireya Vine,

October 10, 1995

I have only been growing Vireyas since January 1989. In 1991, my friend Graham Podd, having visited the RSF sent me a copy of the Vireya Vine book "the First Eight Years" which has become my Vireya 'bible'. During my first reading of this book, I suppose 75% meant little or nothing to me because of my lack of knowledge and experience, but not now. At least once a year I read it through and invariably find answers to problems that have been bothering me. This time it concerns *R. loranthiflorum* - pink form.

This plant was sent to me by another good friend, Hugh Caldwell, as a cutting in 1990. It first flowered in August of 92 and looked to me very much like *R. christiana* x *jasminiflorum*. The flowers had only four lobes whereas the white *loranthiflorum* has five. I could find no reference to a pink form and any list of species. However in VV #22 Richard Cavender list this pink form for sale.

So, can anyone tell me if it is species or a hybrid, and if it is a species, who collected it and from where.

Reg Pohlmann

Little Acre

Duncannon Mead, Stoke Gabriel

Devon TQ9 6QZ

England

I know I fouled up Reg's address. One of the really great challenges of doing the Vireya Vine is figuring out how to do an address. Reg has apparently named his place "Little Acre". I wonder what kind of acre he was really thinking about. The kind that hurts at night after a days work in the garden, I bet. I am sure glad I only have a small lot to slave at. PLEASE NOTE; The Vireya Vine book that Reg talks about is gone. I printed 150 copies out of my own pocket and sold them all and even broke even. The "book" contained VV Issues #1 through #27. Maybe if I find time I should do the next batch. Maybe

From Dick Chaikin

Boston, Massachusetts

Dear VV,

November 9, 1995

I would like to keep all Vireyaholics up to date on the meeting in Oban Scotland immediately after the American Rhododendron Society Convention (May 6-10, 1996). We are calling it the "International Vireya Group." The meeting will be held on May 11th 1996 at 12:30PM.

The local convention authorities have informed me that we will have a meeting room capable of seating only 50 people. Therefore, only the first 50 reservations will be honored.

I must have your reservation prior to April 1996, in order to compile the list before I myself go abroad. All I need is your promise to attend, nothing more, at this time. However, before May 8th 1996 I must have your payment, at which time I will give you your ticket for admission. As stated previously, the £10 is for the cost of the buffet luncheon.

I know that there will be people from the UK who will not be attending the Convention, but who plan to attend the IVG meeting. Because the attendance is limited at the Convention you should not lapse into the false hope that there will be plenty of seats left at the last minute for IVG meeting.

If you have not contacted me yet, please do so right away. I have heard from some people who plan to present some very interesting things, something new about Vireyas. Come join us.

Richard Chaikin
7 Whittier Place
Boston, MA 02114
(617)742-4747

From Richard Warren
Dear Vireya Vine,

Co. Durham, UK
November 3rd 1995

Just a short note to let your readers know that we will be trading in Vireya Rhododendrons beginning in the spring of 1996. We are primarily Orchid specialists and feel that part of the neglected status of Vireyas is that their culture has more in common with Orchids than many Rhododendrons.

If readers would like details of our stock, please get in touch at this address with an international mail order or in the UK, with a stamped address envelope. Here is a list of our current stock.

SPECIES

R. caliginis	
R. carringtoniae	Truss of white, upright tubular perfumed flowers.
R. christi	Orange/red open curved flowers with a yellow throat.
R. himantodes	Narrow deep green leaves and delicate white flowers flecked brown.
R. inconspicuum	
R. leptanthum	Rounded foliage and pink curved tubular flowers.
R. lochiaie	Scarlet bell shaped flowers in a loose truss.
R. loranthiflorum	Flowers, long tubular creamy-white and perfumed.
R. multicolor	Pale primrose flowers. Slender leaves.
R. orbiculatum	Silvery-pink, perfumed, orchid like flowers.
R. pauciflorum	Waxy bell-shaped flowers on a small plant
R. quadrasianum var. rosmarinifolium	
R. rarum	
R. santapaui	
R. scotchburn white	
R. zoelleri	

HYBRIDS

Alisa Nicole	Compact bush, miniature, cerise pink flowers.
Anatta Gold	
Blushing Belle	Bushy miniature with creamy-white flowers tinged pink.
Bob's Choice	
Carillon Bells	Small leafed miniature, rose-pink, nodding bells.
Charming Valentino	Crimson bell shaped flowers.
Craig Faragher	Glossy, bushy habit. Damask pink tubular, perfumed flowers.
Dainty Drops	A miniature, dainty pink bell-shaped flowers.
Elegant Bouquet	Large creamy white and heavily perfumed flowers.
Gossamer White	Silk white medium sized flowers.
Highland White Jade	Scented flowers and foliage. Porcelain white, tubular flowers.
Janelle Marie	Miniature creamy-white, bluish-pink margin to the petals.
Jasorbit	Compact, Flowers are slender, small white, blushed pink.
Jazz Band	Strong growing. Rose-red, orange, yellow.
Lemon Minuet	Bushy, pastel lemon, bell shaped flowers.
Little Ginger	Narrow leaves. Bright orange flowers.
Little Grace	Bushy glossy plant. Pink bell shaped flowers.
Littlest Angel	Compact to 1 metre. Petite, waxy cardinal red bell shaped fls.
Magic Flute	Long, tubular white perfumed flowers.
Our Marcia	Strong growing to 2 metres. Deep rose with ivory centres.
Pennywhistle	Compact, miniature. Bright orange flowers.
Periwinkle	
Pink Poppet	Miniature to 0.75 cm. Rose pink bells.
Rosebelle	Miniature bush like Blushing Belle but with rose pink fls.
Rosie Posie	Strong growing. Tangerine with lemon centres.
Sunny	Bushy to 1.5 m. Rounded truss of bright orange and yellow
Sweet Beatrice	
Sweet Seraphim	Bushy and perfumed. Tubular pink with cream-white throats.
Toff	Very floriferous, soft yellow with salmon/pink/orange border.
Wee Annie	Strong growing miniature, small pink bell shaped flowers.

Richard Warren
Equatorial Plant Company
Gray Lane, Barnard Castle
Co. Durham, DL12 8PK UK
Phone/Fax 01833 690519

Thanks for the list, Richard, and welcome to the Vireya Vine. But what is the species you list as R. scotchburn? I can't find that listed anywhere.

You are right that Vireyas are often treated much more like Orchids than other Rhododendrons. But unlike many Orchids, Vireyas do not need a warm greenhouse and love being outside in the summer time. They are tough plants that will take a lot of neglect but won't stand over-potting or over watering.

Here is a note from the Oregon State University 'Nursery Newsletter'. "Fungus Gnats and Flower Pots: Many of our current generation of flower pots are made with tiny feet that keep them off the bench by about 0.5 mm. That's just enough room for the fungus gnat larvae. Since it is always wet, usually contains small pieces of peat and often have roots sticking out the holes, fungus gnats really love it. Scout these areas out as well! Fungus gnat larvae will eat callus, roots, stems and anything else they can get their teeth into."

Here are some Vireya sellers. I wish the list was twice this long.

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

Te Puna Cottage Gardens
John and Merrill Kenyon
Te Puna Road RD 6
Tauranga, New Zealand
Ph. (07)552-5756

Cape Cod Vireyas (Dick Chaikin)
405 Jones Rd.
Fallmouth MA 02540
(508)548-2233 leave a message

Rhododendron Species Foundation
see return address on VV
Catalogue sales to members

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

Richard Warren
Equatorial Plant Company
Lane, Barnard Castle
Gray Co. Durham DL12 8PK UK
Phone/Fax 01833 690519

The Vireya Vine is financed by its subscribers. The only thing you pay for is printing and postage. Fran and I do the work for the love of it or for some other unknown reason. 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 but you should send money when you feel that you should. Use your credit card to make payments to the RSF if you want.

New subscribers or contributors since issue # 43 are;

Murray McAlister	Australia
Elaine Ayers	Ohio
Andrew Biles	Washington State
David & Pauline Brown	New Zealand
Brian Clancy	Australia
Don Dulac	California

Jerry Fickes	California
Andrew Guthrie	British West Indies
Denise Key	Florida
Chip Muller	Washington State
Bob & Jay Murray	New Jersey
Mark Nixon	Vancouver Island, Canada
Marie Nyman	Washington State
Reg Pohlmann	England
Derek Ratcliffe	England
Shirley Ann Rock	Washington State
Hideo Suzuki	Japan
William Taylor	Australia
Mark Wright	Florida
Milton Zipper	New York

I sure wonder what you all are doing with Vireyas out there in the wild wild world.

I have R. goodenoughii (CW PNG) with flower buds for the first time. Lucie Sorensen had R. solitarium (CW Mt. Kainde PNG) bloom in October. It was a nice pink - but the species book says it is white. I will send a photo off to George Argent at the RBG Edinburgh and maybe he will say yes or no.

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