

VIREYA VINE

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FOUNDATION

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E. White Smith, Editor

I am not sure how to go about this but do think that we (the Vireya Vine) need to tell our readers a little bit more about what is going on with Vireya sales and distribution. In this spirit we are asking sellers and/or distributors of Vireyas to write about their operations and their themselves. About who and what they are doing and any other thing that could be interesting.

So to start the ball rolling: My name is E. White Smith and I have been the Vireya Vine Editor since 1985. Bob Badger who lived in Kent Washington, produced for first four issues. In October of 1970, I attended the Pacific Rhododendron Conference in New Zealand and Australia. On a tour bus around NZ I had the pleasure of becoming a good friend with Don Stanton from Wollongong Australia. Don was one of the very early growers of Vireyas in his country and he made sure I shared his enthusiasm for these plants. When I got back home to Tacoma, Washington, Don sent me cuttings and seed for many years. Other good people in Australia also sent lots of seed. I grew Vireyas for years all alone because I knew of no one else growing them, no one to talk to or to trade with other than my friends in Australia and New Zealand. Sometime before 1982 Bob Badger got a few Vireya plants. Bob and his wife Marge, Fran Rutherford, myself and a few others were serving on the Education Committee of the Rhododendron Species Foundation. At a meeting of the committee I suggested that we start a "world newsletter" about species Rhododendrons. Bob and Marge took up this idea and published the first issue of the Vireya Vine and then the next three issues.

In 1994 my good wife Marlene passed away. In time I began to visit Bovees Nursery in Portland, Oregon and became a good friend with Lucie Sorensen, the owner. When I visited I often took along a few Vireyas as gifts and took home a few of their plants. In September 1996 Lucie and I were married at the Nursery. At that time, Bovees Nursery probably had the largest collection of Vireya species and hybrids in the USA. So then we put our two collections together and I moved to Portland, Oregon and helped in the operation of the Nursery. At this time we have Vireya clones, hybrids and species numbering up in to the 650 forms. We have over 90 Vireya species out of the +- 160 species and species forms in cultivation in the world. We love species Rhododendrons. Bovees Nursery is not a large operation. There are only three of us. Lucie, her business partner George Watson and myself. Lucie and I have just installed a new home at the Nursery so we no longer need to drive across Portland twice a day. Boy what a relief from that drive! As anyone who has tried will know, a small plant nursery is not a money making operation. We make enough to pay the taxes and the bills, but not enough to pay employees. Except for two part time people. Great Fun Though.

So ----- what are we doing now? Bovees Nursery is a Mail Order Nursery. We ship Vireyas all over America and to the world. Outside of the USA we have shipped Vireyas to Canada, Czechoslovakia, Columbia, England, Germany, Honduras, Puerto Rico, Scotland, South Africa, Taiwan, and Thailand. We have not shipped to Australia or New Zealand because of their very, very strict import regulations. We have sent many plants to Hawaii, both the Big Island and to Honolulu.

The Opry Land Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee, has received two large groups of plants. Opry Land is a wonderful place and one of our friends was there and took photos of Vireyas in their very large indoor landscape. We have shipped plants to Disney Land in Florida and have heard from friends and customers about them. Only a couple of weeks ago we sent a large order to the United States Department of Agriculture Experiment Station in Miami, Florida. They are starting up a new program of work on ornamental plants. Plants have also gone to the Seattle, Washington Conservatory, the Phipps Conservatory in Pittsburgh, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Atlanta Botanic Garden, Callaway Gardens in Georgia, Huntington Botanic Gardens in Los Angeles,

During the first week in March of this year we had the pleasure of hosting for a day Leslie Riggall and his wife Gladys. They have a large private Botanic Garden in South Africa and have been frequent contributors to the VV. Many other dedicated Vireya people have been visitors during the last few years including, Jack Wilson, Bill Taylor and wife and Ron Moodyclife and wife from Australia, Dr. Glen Jamieson and Margaret deWeese from BC Canada. Glen is working on a large collection of Vireyas and Margaret is a prime mover for Rhododendrons on Vancouver Island in British Colombia. John Bodenham and his wife Margaret probably have the best collection in England (other than Edinburgh, Scotland) and they stopped by last summer for a visit. From New Zealand we have hosted Jan Velvin, a nursery owner from Auckland, David Binney, a doctor and plant explorer from the east coast of the north island, John Kenyon who has a wonderful retail nursery on the east coast of the north island, and our great friend Keith Adams from New Plymouth NZ. Keith probably has introduced from Northern Borneo, as many species as anyone except for George Argent. Keith will be speaking at the American Rhododendron Society Convention in Eugene Oregon during the last week of April this year. Then Keith will come up to Portland to be with us for a few days. The famous Dr. George Argent from the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, Scotland visited a couple of years ago and we hosted a few friends for an evening of drinks and snacks while George gave us a private slide show in front of the Nursery sales area. It is impossible to list all of the Americans who have been to Bovees to visit the Vireya collection but everyone is always welcome. There is nothing we would rather do than talk Vireyas with friends.

So, we are busy as you can see. We have a Web site on the Internet which has attracted many people to the Vireya world. We are slowly getting out of the "hardy Rhododendron business". I am 66 years old and George is 82. I am not allowed to tell Lucie's age but it is fair to say that she still goes full speed every day. I have tried hard to keep the Vireya Vine separate from the Nursery but that is not always possible, being as we are a major supplier of plants in North America. In this light I felt it would be interesting for the Vine readers to understand what we were doing at The Bovees Nursery.

I still maintain a home in Tacoma, Washington and travel to there every couple of weeks for a few days. This gives me a chance to visit the Rhododendron Species Foundation collection and to talk and exchange species with the staff there. We feel very strongly that species need to be passed around so that they are not lost to cultivation. Some of the species at the RSF and at

Bovees probably are some of the very few specimens in the world. It is quite sad when the only plant of a species is lost from cultivation in this world of ours. And you know what? It's all Great Fun Though. Now let's hear from more of you out there.

IMPORTANT meetings. On October-23-25th-2001 the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust garden on the north island of New Zealand will celebrate their 50th year. The garden has a wonderful new Vireya display house. Also, the New Zealand Rhododendron Association Conference will be held in the city of New Plymouth, which is very near the Pukeiti garden. Conference days are October 20 to 23th 2001
See their INTERNET web site for more information or get with us at Bovees Nursery.

On May 17 to 19th 2002 the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, Scotland will host an International Rhododendron Conference. Dr. George Argent is the conference organiser (he is the Vireya guy). There is a 200 person limit for this meeting.
E-mail address is g.argent@rbge.org.uk Fax 44(0)131 552 0382

Computer CD Rom Disk - Chris Callard in England has produced a CD-Rom for your computer. It is Windows 95/98 compatible and expands upon all of the topics covered on his INTERNET Web Site. Priced at \$20.00US plus postage and packing.
CD disk includes, History of Vireya culture; Distribution of Vireya in the wild; Cultivation advice; Vireya displays and nursery sources worldwide; Full species classification list - alphabetical and by subsections; Comprehensive list of over 700 named Vireya hybrids; Hybrid parentage list; and photographs of over 250 varieties of Vireya species and hybrids.
See his Web Site to order with a credit card. www.website.lineone.net/~cjcallard
For non-credit card orders, send a check for £15.00 drawn on a UK bank to Chris Callard, 26 Colwood Gardens, London, SW192DT, England

Chris has also located a few copies of the book "Rhododendrons of Sabah", published by Sabah Parks in Northern Borneo. This wonderful book is now out of print. It will probably be priced at about \$30US. If you do not have one write to Chris or send a E-mail to chris@vireya.co.uk

Charlot MT Teng
Dear Vireya Vine,
Editor note: I asked how he growes Vireyas in Taiwan.

Taiwan
Nov. 2, 2000

I just grow them outside with semi-shade . It is very easy to grow Vireyas in Taiwan from late October to mid-April . Temperature ranges from 25 degrees Celsius to 12 degrees Celsius , and sometimes drops to 7 degrees Celsius . I grow the Vireyas in large clay pots , add potting media as 1/2 with tree fern fiber and 1/2 with perlite , and then cover with sphagnum moss on the top of the pot surface . I have collected 40 Vireya hybrids from Australia . They are blooming from April to June and from October to December . It is too hot to bloom from July to August .

Normally , I move them to the shade area in summer . However, I found that it is difficult to grow the small leaf hybrids in Taiwan and it is easier to grow the larger leaf hybrids.

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Vireyaholics Arise!

Viva Vireya!!!

By Sherla Bertelmann, Treasurer-Hawaii Chapter American Rhododendron Society

In January of 1997 a handful of Vireya Rhododendron enthusiasts gathered in Volcano Village on the Big Island of Hawaii to lay the foundation of establishing a chapter in Hawaii for the American Rhododendron Society (ARS). In October of 1997 the Hawaii Chapter was formally granted ARS Chapter status. Over the past 3 years membership and interest has steadily increased. Little did the new members know they, too, would soon become "Vireyaholics".

First comes the fascination for the many varieties one sees at the monthly meetings. This leads to the challenge of learning how to root them. Oh, the sense of accomplishment when more cuttings take root than don't. This leads to wanting to try more.

The Hawaii Chapter fully supported this need by putting on demonstrations by some of the more successful growers. There was much sharing about what worked and what didn't among the members. Advice from others (i.e. Bill Moyles, George Argent, E.W. Smith to mention a few) was sought and ideas incorporated. As each member learned about his or her particular microclimate and what was needed for success in his or her area, the success rate of propagation rose.

Once a vireyaholic's confidence is up they are ready to try more things, such as new varieties, species, seed sowing, and growing out seedlings. Now new territories start to open up as talk turns to fertilizer, lacewing bugs, and potting media. The craving for more strengthens as they look for articles, books, and newsletters whose main topic is "Vireya".

Once again the Hawaii Chapter rose to support the members needs. New plants were brought in from Australia, seedlings grown by Mitch were distributed, books from America, England & Australia were bought and copies of articles on Vireya put into the small but growing library. Speakers from Scotland & New Zealand presented slide shows of far away places and more exotic Vireya.

The need for more continues to grow and along with it comes the realization that vireyaholics are worldwide.

The thirst for more and the awareness it brings opens up more worlds. Communication by way of email & snail mail has greatly led to help satisfy some of the burning questions. Sites on the web like Chris Callard's with Vireya photos have been invaluable. The Hawaii Chapter sponsored a Vireya Seminar in March of 2000 with participants coming from around the world all with one thing in common, a fascination for the Vireya.

Now comes the desire to share the beauty and joy of growing Vireya with everyone-encouraging others, offering advice, or hand's on help.

This is a true attribute of a vireyaholic...the sharing. Cuttings, plants, advice and help are given with a free and loving spirit. For two years the Hawaii Chapter has participated in our annual Orchid Show with an education/demonstration booth. Members man the booth and give openly of their experience to all interested persons.

The need to share, to encourage growing, to increase the awareness & interest in Vireya has led the Hawaii Chapter to their next big challenge, a Vireya educational/demonstration garden. It started about a year ago as a small outdoor planting of 50+ Vireya at the Rainforest Zoo in Panaewa, Hilo. It didn't take long to realize that we wanted more than a casual planting of a few Vireya. We had a bigger vision, one with several beds that could house not only hybrids but also species. Raised beds lined with hapuu ferns, filled with organic material, with a rain sensitive irrigation system that would go on only if there was no rain and with proper plant identification signs...that was more in line with the vision.

A landscape architect has drawn such a vision in his preliminary sketch consisting of a 6000 sq. ft. area. A memorandum of agreement has already been signed between the Hawaii Chapter and the Zoo Director.

Everything is in line to start...except, the funds. It has been estimated to cost about \$25,000 to clear the land, prep it, put in the irrigation and the bedding material for the first completely public outdoor Vireya garden in the United States.

The Hawaii Chapter wants to avoid a financial burden upon the zoo or the County of Hawaii and is seeking private funding in the form of grants or direct donations. I am appealing to all Vireyaholics for help. The help can come in many forms...such as, money, plants or advice & leads. Please, if you have anything to share contact me at tropical@greensand.net or write to me, Sherla Bertelmann, at HCR-1 - Box 4641 - Keaau, HI - 96749. Monetary donations/checks should be made out to Hawaii Chapter-ARS.

Vireyaholics Arise!!!

Viva Vireyas

The Vireya Vine is financed by its subscribers. The only things you pay for are printing and postage. Fran Rutherford and I 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.

New subscribers or recent contributors since issue #59 are:

Marvin Bame	Oregon	Walter Loescher	California
Pat Bender	Washington State	Robert Nelson	Washington State
Michael Barclay	California	Lynn Marcy	Georgia
Robert Batts	Florida	Charles Martin	Hawaii
Sherla Bertelmann	Hawaii	James Middleton	Washington State
Barbara Campbell	California	John Morris	California
Lloyd DeGarmo	Hawaii	Marlise Mueller	California
Darrin Duling	Florida	Bob & Jay Murray	New Jersey
Douglas Eiss	Hawaii	Richard Organ	Oregon
David Fluharty	Virginia	Nan Ray	California
James Gears	Pennsylvania	Leslia Riggall	South Africa
Jack Goertzgn	California	Arnold Silverman	Colorado
Fran Jackson	Hawaii	Graham Smith	New Zealand
Barbara Johansen	Washington State	James Smith	Texas
Christy Hartsell	California	Parker Smith	California
Honore Hacanson	Washington State	John Spring	California
Tom Hoffman	Oregon	Lori Stanton	Washington State
Thomas Hugues	Tennessee	Carlos Soto	Honduras
Ronald Kessler	Florida	Charlot MT Teng	Taiwan
Heinz Kratz	Germany	Jane Whitefield	Hawaii
Bill Lindeman	Washington State	Gloria Wildharber	California
		Matt Zack	Connecticut

From Brentel Hansvorg
Dear Vireya Vine,

Tirol, Austria
February 2001

Looking for *Rhododendron* in Sulawesi (Celebes)

In his book 'Flora Malesiana', Dr. Sleumer writes about *Vireya Rhododendron* which grow in the Toraja region near Rantepao and Rantelemo. Spending our vacation on Bali, we took a short side trip to Sulawesi. In Ujung Pandang we meet Acho-our invaluable companion. We rented a car and set off northbound. In Rantepao we started our first attempt to find a *Rhododendron seranicum* (mainly found on the Molukkes). A slightly different species is said to grow on the road from Rantepao to Palopo. On a pass (1180m) we stopped by a TV station where we found the white blossoms of *Rhododendron rhodopus*. Much to our surprise we found another rhododendron, probably *R. seranicum* with small petals in rose and purple and blossoms that are two inches long. It is the only one of its kind in this area. After having seen a few more *R. rhodopus* we return to Rantepao. On the next day, we climbed the Gunung Sesean starting from Batutumonga. We were there two years ago, in January. At 1300m a.s.l. we found a *R. rhodopus*. Next to it, by a little lake, we spot a beautiful bush, about two metres high and covered with small red blossoms, *R. quadrasianum* var. *celebicum*. The vegetation on top of the mountain was destroyed by fire two years ago but has recovered since - we found a *R. zollingeri* in blossom and a *R. rhodopus* with two wonderful white blossoms growing from what seems to be dead wood. The rhododendron here are obviously resistant to fire. On the next day we looked for *R. vanvuureнии*, which according to 'Flora Malesiana', can be found between Rantepao and Rantelemo. Its blossoms are yellow and orange or white and pink, so it is easily spotted. We walked across hills all day, from Rantepao to Rantelemo without finding anything. The landscape looks very cultivated here and the reports about *R. vanvuureнии* are fairly old. Dr. Sleumer writes that they are mainly to be found in the west of the Latimodjong Range. Rantepao and Rantelemo are in the north, so we started another attempt further south, near Cakke.

It is a beautiful day so we stopped at the Village Karangan to take a picture of Gunung Sinadji, which we have an excellent view of from there. Since we haven't found a lot of cuttings and are left with plenty of time, we decide to climb Mount Sinadji. Acho has never been there before, but says that he knows somebody who has and tells us not to worry. At first we have to get to Uluwai, a village at 1.000m a.s.l. which lies at the end of the valley. After a long search, Acho finds a truck and we are seated between bags of fertilizer, rice and women working on the market. Our journey on bad and bumpy roads takes about three hours and finally takes us to Uluwai, a settlement at the end of the valley in a landscape of breathtaking beauty. We found accommodation in a little hut owned by friendly, hospitable people. They even have a canopy for their guests. We also found a guide and carriers for our luggage. On the next morning we set out. Walking uphill through rice fields, we leave the inhabited area. At 1.300m a.s.l., in bushy vegetation, we are surprised to see the bright yellow/orange blossoms of *R. vanvuureнии*, which remind us of *R. zoelleri* from New Guinea and the hybrid Simbu Sunset. Later on our way back we took a few cuttings. We continue on a steep slope through high ferns. It began to rain and soon we found the first leeches.

We have almost forgotten the hardships involved in climbing tropical mountains. The path has not been regularly used and is sometimes invisible. Our journey continues through steep oak forests, while our guide keeps cutting a path with his cutlass and marking the trees every once in a while. At 2000m a.s.l. we find a resting place. The ascent is getting more and more difficult. In the foggy forest we lose our orientation, climb over fallen trees that have sunk in the muddy

ground and continue uphill. When we are close to giving up, we finally find the path again. It is barely visible. We climb over roots and crawl under fallen trees, still going uphill. Taking a little rest we discover the sizable blossoms of *R. radians* high up on a tree. At 2400m a.s.l. our guide stops. We are at a little campsite, the last one with water supply before we reach the summit. We put up our tents and rest for a while, then climb on towards the summit.

At 2700m a.s.l. we found yet another Rhododendron with pink blossoms and brown leaf bottoms, maybe a *R. pudorinum* or *R. arenicolum*. A thunderstorm is coming up and the thunder is gaining force. After eight hours of strenuous climbing we are very exhausted and have to make our way back. Hardly have we arrived at our campsite when we are beset by heavy rainfall. There will be no hot dinner tonight. Acho could not buy gas in Ujung Pandang and it is impossible to make a fire with all the wet wood. On the next morning we have tea and noodles. High up on a stem, Acho has discovered a

R. radians in full blossom. Acho and I are both unable to climb up, but we have a young man with us who gathers some Rotang, a kind of liana that is used for manufacturing Rattan furniture. With great ease the young man climbs up 6 or seven metres and retrieves a branch with two large inflorescence. It is a *R. radians* with roughly 15 blossoms, white and wide open. The trees are full of orchids, but only few of them are in bloom.

The mountain forests of Indonesia are one of the few landscapes of the world that remain untouched. Long stretches of lichen and moss hang from the trees. At 2300m a.s.l. we find a magnificent Rhododendron with three tubular blossoms, probably a *R. psilanthum*. Next to a thicket of Heliconia we find two more large white blossoms on the ground. They are about four inches long, two inches wide and fragrant. This has to be *R. bloembergenii*, which also grows here on the Latimodjong Range. The plant itself cannot be found. The way down is even more arduous than the way up. The young man has brought us a handful of Rhododendron from the peak area. They are the same that we have previously found, pink blossomed and with brown leaf bottoms, *R. pudorinum* or *R. arenicolum*. There is also a Rhododendron without blossoms, with large, thick leaves that grow mostly at the end of the shoots. At 1300m a.s.l. we find another *R. vanvuurenii*. The orange and yellow blossoms shine out from the undergrowth. Next to it we find another very attractive kind, with yellow tubes and petals with a pink hue. Of both plants we take cuttings. Very exhausted we arrive in Uluwai. We spend one more night there. After the heavy rainfalls during the night we have difficulties reaching the main road from Rantepao to Pare Pare, where our driver is waiting with the car. From Ujung Pandang we go back to Bali, where we spend a few more days recovering from the trip. This adventure has had a great impression on all of us. After a twelve-hour flight we reach our home in Tyrol via Vienna. The cuttings seem to be in good shape and we will see whether they grow roots.

This was certainly an adventurous trip. The "easy gathering of Rhododendron" definitely has its limits in Sulawesi.

Brentel Hansvorg

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Some interesting Internet sites www.vireya.net (Chris Callards new site)
www.mipagina.euskaltel.es.almand/vireya, www.tropicalgardner.com

VIREYA NURSERIES

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They also handle the Vireya seed exchange. WorldWide.

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