



# Pukeiti NEWSLETTER

Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust Inc.

VOLUNTEERING  
IN THE GARDEN  
& OTHER  
MEMBER  
ACTIVITIES  
inside

[www.pukeiti.org.nz](http://www.pukeiti.org.nz)

## Plant Royalty – the Big-leaf Rhododendrons

The visit planned as part of the 'Soup and Roll Day' on August 21 to the Valley of the Giants to see these great plants, many over 10 meters tall, tucked into the native forest, Covid level four lock-down cancelled. A great pity, because this year promised to be a good flowering year and the visit would have been memorable.

The staff had worked hard to clear around the trees, open up vistas and develop new planting areas. At the start of the big-leaf

area a fitness trail (not a compulsory part of any walk) is also under development and will be officially opened later this year. New planting sites adjacent to some of the fitness areas offer enough protection for the hardier vireyas to be trialled outside. They will add colour at a different time of the year but will never compete with the majesty of some of the big-leaf varieties.

Few who have visited before would not have been in awe of some of these 'royal' plants, particularly at the time of the

planned visit when the large *R. protistum* and *magnificum* species and their hybrids would have been spectacular. Here are a few of the hybrids which would have been seen. All have been developed at Pukeiti and named by Graham Smith after members who have given outstanding service.

The good news is that there are still several species still to flower and a visit would be rewarding; but not until the time when Covid Level 2 restrictions allow this. The Rainforest Café will be open then too, with appropriate social distancing. Plan a royal visit.

Let us hope that the remainder of this year's members' programme can be held and Covid restrictions are no more.

Lynn Bublitz



R. 'Jack Anderson'

Jack Anderson was Secretary of the Trust (1962-85)



R. 'Geoff Broker'

Geoff Broker was the first Secretary of the Trust



R. 'Gordon Collier.'

Gordon Collier is an early member and volunteer, a former Board member and is presently Patron of the Trust.



R. 'Ina Hair'

Ina Hair, wife of the third Curator of Pukeiti, lived in The Lodge and provided hostess duties for visitors (1960-9)

## Plants of Interest at Pukeiti

Peter Catt writes:



### *Rhododendron rarilepidotum*

Subgenus *Vireya*: Section *Schisthanthe* – subsection *Euvireya*

*Rhododendron rarilepidotum* is a shrub to 4m tall endemic to Sumatra. It is found in sub-alpine shrubberies and open volcanic areas from 1000-2500m. It is mostly terrestrial and only rarely epiphytic.

Its conservation assessment is LC. (Least Concern)

Pukeiti has several forms of *R. rarilepidotum* with both red and yellow forms planted in the Vireya Walk, the Kokopu House and outside the Bublitz House.

### *Dimorphanthera alpina*

*Dimorphanthera* is a genus of flowering plants in the family Ericaceae that mainly occurs on the island of New Guinea. "The name *Dimorphanthera* comes from the Greek *dimorphos* (two-formed) and *anthera* (anther) referring to the almost woody dimorphic anthers. This trait makes it distinct from its close relatives *Agapetes vaccinium* and *Paphia*." (Conlon 2012). There are approximately 80 to 100 species that have been described. The genus contains shrubs, large lianas, and occasionally small trees.

*Dimorphanthera alpina* is a climbing vine and as its name suggests is found at higher altitudes (approx. 3000m). Cultivation requirements are like vireya rhododendrons requiring good drainage and protection from frost.

It is currently flowering in the Vireya Walk.



## From the Members Committee

Heather Robson writes:

**Anne, in the August e-newsletter, gave an excellent summary of the mid-winter dinner which really was a great way to spend a cold, wet winter's day.**

Prior to this, back in May, the walk Andrew Brooker had taken around Pukeiti's rhododendron collection was well attended by both members of the general public and of the Trust. Not surprisingly, in a collection of rhododendrons as large as we have at Pukeiti, Andrew was able to find many unusual and less well-known features of this interesting genus to point out to the group. In doing so he also took everyone on a guided tour of the garden. On the walk there were several local people for whom this was their first visit to Pukeiti and they couldn't believe what they had been missing. They didn't join us for tea and coffee at the end of the walk, as there were still parts of the garden to be seen and they went off to do a bit more exploring on their own.

In July, Peter Catt led the walk looking at our collection of vireya rhododendrons growing in the vireya houses. Those who attended were educated and entertained as well as being able to get their questions, about the cultivation and care of this more tender rhododendron sub-genus, answered.

We also held our annual perennial propagation day in late July. The Wednesday volunteers plus two other members dug up, split up and potted up a great selection of plants from both Pukeiti and members' home gardens. These will now be grown on until they are listed on our plant list in February 2022.

Then of course in August, just as the large-leafed rhododendrons were coming into their best flowering period, and our soup and roll day was less than a week away, the inevitable happened and Delta made it out into the community. We cancelled our walk and lunch but do remember that the rhododendrons are oblivious to this virus that keeps

interrupting our well laid plans. Should NZ get on top of this outbreak and return to a lower level that allows things like garden visits then the large-leafed rhodos will still be flowering for several weeks and it will still be well worth a trip up to Pukeiti to see them.

Coming up, Covid permitting, we have our garden visits, our 70th Spring Members' Day, a walk concentrating on the NZ raised rhododendron hybrids growing at Pukeiti and finally our Christmas BBQ. In between these events many members will also be involved with Rhodenza Taranaki (the NZ Rhododendron Association's annual conference) and the Taranaki Rhododendron Festival.

In the last newsletter Lynn wrote about the liberation of kiwis close to Pukeiti. Since then we have been told that some have moved even closer and that 2 males are incubating eggs. I'm so pleased they released kiwis that would do the correct thing!

Heather Robson



## Members' Activities

Heather Robson writes:

### GARDEN VISITS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19.

**10:30am:** Meet at and visit the garden of Jim Rumbal, 84 Matarikoriko Road, Waitara.

**11:30am:** Drive to Riverlea, the garden of Vince and Anne Naus, 365 Corbett Road.

This is where we will have lunch. Please bring your own lunch and a cup for a hot drink. The committee will provide tea, coffee, sugar and milk and we will have thermos flasks of hot water available.

**1:30pm:** Visit Barbara & Brent Jury's garden, 158 Mahoetahi Road.

**2:30pm:** Visit Alan & Lorraine Inch's garden, 10 Ludlow Place, Bell Block.

Following this visit we are invited to Robin and Lynn Bublitz' place, 27 Durham Avenue, New Plymouth for a social occasion to end the day. Please bring drinks of your choice and nibbles to share.

**The garden visits will take place regardless of the weather this year.**

We are going to private properties, some of which have limited parking opportunities close by, so rather than all arrive in separate cars, please consider car-pooling with a friend.

### SPRING MEMBERS' DAY AND AGM

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 09.**

This year we will be celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust and we hope that many of you will take the opportunity to come back to Pukeiti, reconnect with friends of old and reflect with great satisfaction on the marvellous garden that exists today because of your involvement now and in the past.

We will also have a few plants for sale. If you think you may wish to purchase some, please bring some small cash with you.

**10:30am:** Walks will be leaving from The Lodge to view the garden or you may just want to walk around it at your own pace.

**11:00am:** Over summer we are unable

to book the buggy at this time because there is a public tour then. Should members want a ride around the garden on the buggy, please join this tour which leaves by the sign at the bottom of the stairs by the Rata Room.

**11:45am** or when the Board Members are back from their garden walk, whichever is later: We will come together for a short celebration commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Trust.

**12:00 midday** (approx.): A pot-luck lunch will be served in the Douglas Cook Room. Please bring finger food for a shared meal. Tea and coffee will be provided.

**1:30 pm:** Annual General Meeting in the Rata Room, Rainforest Pavilion.

**2:15pm:** At the conclusion of the AGM, Renee Davies, the Open Space Officer for NPDC will speak to us on 'Developing a Garden'.

Renee has previously worked in a number of roles associated with plants, gardening and parks.

She draws the plans for gardens featured in 'The New Zealand Gardener' magazine. Designing and developing her own garden distils much of her broad horticultural experience which will be highlighted in her talk.

**Board Elections 2021:** Nominations have been received from John Eagles and Marion MacKay. Their election is to be confirmed on the day.

### RHODENZA

**TUESDAY 26 - FRIDAY 29  
OCTOBER**

Pukeiti members are invited, and welcome, to attend this conference and it is not too late to register. A form is enclosed with this newsletter. Conference information and the registration form are also available on the NZRA website, <https://www.rhododendron.org.nz>.

If you have paid but not submitted your registration details, the organising committee would appreciate you doing this and it can all be done online at the NZRA website. Just fill in the online form and click send. Thank you.

## TARANAKI GARDEN FESTIVAL

**FRIDAY 29 OCTOBER –  
SUNDAY 07 NOVEMBER**

Volunteers are needed to assist Pukeiti Staff with hosting duties and plants sales at The Lodge, and for membership promotion. This is a very pleasant way to spend a day interacting with people from around New Zealand as they come into the atrium to see the flower display and to buy the rhododendrons Andrew sells during the festival.

This year Diane Toole has offered to organise the roster, and she will be contacting members asking for their help. Alternatively you can contact her by emailing [wanderweg@xtra.co.nz](mailto:wanderweg@xtra.co.nz) or phoning 027 414 4060. The day starts at 10:00am and finishes mid-afternoon. The finish time is flexible and varies depending on the weather and the number of visitors.

### LEARN ABOUT NZ RAISED HYBRID RHODODENDRONS SUNDAY 21 NOVEMBER

A walk to the Hybrid Block will leave from The Lodge at 10:00am. This will be followed by refreshments in The Lodge. The public are invited on this walk.

### END OF YEAR BBQ SUNDAY DECEMBER 12

Last year several members mentioned that they found it difficult to attend this event on a Saturday, so we have decided to hold this year's on a Sunday. (Please note the date in the last newsletter was incorrect.) We hope most of you will still be able to attend. The BBQ will be served up at 12:00 noon at The Lodge (depending on the cooks of course!). The Trust will be providing the BBQ meat and buns but please bring a salad or a small plate of finger food for dessert to share with others.

**RSVP by Thursday, December 09** to Heather (06) 7572460 or email [cattrobson@gmail.com](mailto:cattrobson@gmail.com)

Please mark these dates in your calendar. Some dates and details have been changed so check carefully

# Members' Activities

# 2021

The New Zealand Rhododendron Association Inc

## Rhodenza TARANAKI 2021

'Celebrating Rhododendrons'

26-29 October 2021, New Plymouth, The Devon Hotel

**Great News! Early bird registrations extended to 15 September**

**Programme includes**

- Pre-conference garden visits
- Welcome dinner
- International Guest Speakers – either in person or virtually including Steve Hootman and others
- A day at Pukeiti – tours and workshops
- Conservation, propagation, plant husbandry and DNA analysis of Rhododendrons
- Tours of prominent Taranaki gardens
- Conference dinner celebrating legacy
- NZRA AGM
- Farewell Luncheon

**Registration**

Registration forms and conference details will be available from May. All members of the Association, Pukeiti and the Taranaki Rhododendron & Garden Group are welcome to attend part or all of the event. This will be a memorable event in a region like no other.

**Mark this in your diary now!**

This Annual NZRA Conference will be held in association with the Taranaki Rhododendron & Garden Group, Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust and Taranaki Regional Council.

**Plan to stay a little longer? Taranaki Garden Festival follows.**

**Bookings for The Lodge facilities and Studio can be made on the TRC website**

[www.trc.govt.nz/gardens/venue-hire-and-tours/pukeiti-studio-accommodation/](http://www.trc.govt.nz/gardens/venue-hire-and-tours/pukeiti-studio-accommodation/)

**Pukeiti**  
Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust Inc.

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**Secretary**  
Anne Howard Phone 021 0831 5444  
pukeiti@pukeiti.com

**Chairperson**  
Gordon Bailey gordon.bailey@codc.govt.nz

**Taranaki**  
Regional Council

[www.pukeiti.org.nz](http://www.pukeiti.org.nz)  
is worth a look!

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 Members' gardens visit

A selection of members' gardens will be open for members to visit.

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 09 Spring Members' Day & AGM

A celebration of our 70th Anniversary.

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28 Pukeiti hosts the Rhodenza Conference for the day.

Volunteers needed for serving food and drinks and membership recruitment.

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29 - SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 07 2021 Taranaki Garden Festival

Volunteers needed for hosting in The Lodge and membership recruitment.

## SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21 Learn about NZ raised rhododendron hybrids

A guided walk around the hybrid block. Walk leaves from The Lodge at 10:00am followed by refreshments in The Lodge.

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12 \*Christmas BBQ

RSVP Thursday, December 09

## Members' Committee meetings

Tuesday, November 16 - 9:30am – The Lodge

## Board meetings

Saturday, October 09 – 9:00am, Board Room, The Lodge

## TUESDAY, 26 OCTOBER - FRIDAY, 29 OCTOBER Rhodenza Taranaki 2021

The New Zealand Rhododendron Association Inc. Conference is being held at various venues in Taranaki. Pukeiti Members are welcome to attend.

TARANAKI REGIONAL COUNCIL

[www.trc.govt.nz](http://www.trc.govt.nz)

<b>Office hours</b>	Mon-Fri 8am - 5pm	<b>Environmental hotline</b>	0800 736 222
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