



Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden Overview

The Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, located between Seattle and Tacoma, is a 22-acre woodland garden that is home to the largest collection of *Rhododendron* species in the world. With a Victorian stumpery, Rutherford Conservatory, pond garden, extensive fern collection, rock garden, and more, visitors will experience a diverse botanical collection in a Pacific Northwest forest setting. The garden is home to beautiful companion plants, including the famous Himalayan Blue Poppies, Camellias, Magnolias, Japanese maples, and many rare plants.

The Visitor Center features interpretive information about the garden and a year-round nursery with plants that have been propagated and cultivated in on-site production greenhouses.

Quick Facts

Year Established	1964
Opened to public	1980
Annual Attendance	28,000
Acreage	22 acres with 13 features
<i>R.</i> species in collection	700+
Members	1,000+
Volunteers	16
Operating Hours	Tue-Sun from 10 am-4 pm
Adult Admission	\$10 / \$7 Seniors & Students Children and military are free

Media Inquiries: Media@rhodygarden.org; (253) 345-2515

[FACEBOOK.COM/RHODYGARDEN](https://www.facebook.com/rhodygarden) • [INSTAGRAM.COM/RHODYGARDEN](https://www.instagram.com/rhodygarden) • [WEBSITE: RHODYGARDEN.ORG](https://www.rhodygarden.org)

PROGRAMMING & MISSION STATEMENT

As a living museum, the RSBG conserves and shares its international collection with both the scientific community and the general public. Known worldwide for the garden's contributions to scholarship and research, the RSBG's educational and scientific offerings include an annual *Rhododendron* species symposium, workshops, annual community festivals, seed and pollen shipment, live plant distributions, selections of rare and ornamental plants, and a biannual catalog with up-to-the-minute findings.

Mission Statement The Rhododendron Species Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation, research, acquisition, evaluation, cultivation, public display, and distribution of *Rhododendron* species.

Staff

Steve Hootman Executive Director of Horticulture & Curator

Grace Pham Executive Director of Business Operations

Atsuko Gibson Nursery Manager & Assistant Curator

Emily Joseph Assistant Nursery Manager & Retail Sales Manager

Will Clausen Horticulturist & Assistant Curator

Makenna Gallucci Marketing & Outreach Manager

Janey O'Neil Administrative Assistant

Kimberely Farmer Rutherford Conservatory Horticulturist

Marissa Swindler Assistant Horticulturist

Maddie Van Buskirk Visitor Services Representative

Emilio Pascua Maintenance & Facilities Coordinator

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Late spring blooms



Rhododendron macgregoriae



Polystichum setiferum in the fall



R. orbiculare overlooking meadow



Himalayan Blue Poppy



Rutherford Conservatory in the fall



Pond in Rutherford Conservatory



Plant Sales Nursery



Cardiocrinum giganteum



Aerial view of Rutherford Conservatory



Rutherford Conservatory

Brief History

The Rhododendron Species Foundation is a non-profit organization founded and incorporated in 1964 by Pacific Northwest members of the American Rhododendron Society in order to secure the finest authentic forms of *Rhododendron* species and to develop a comprehensive collection of this plant genus. Because of the destruction of *Rhododendron* habitats in many areas of the world, conservation has become of primary importance in recent years. This concern led to the formation of the Rhododendron Species Foundation and has guided its activities.

Video: A day at the Garden



Press Coverage

Awards & Accolades

2025 Best in the PNW - Seattle Times

2023 Community Impact Award - Greater Federal Way Chamber of Commerce

2003 Exceptional Educational Exhibit Award of Merit - Northwest Flower & Garden Show

1996 Educational Exhibit Award of Merit - Northwest Flower & Garden Show



2026 Events

Pop-up Plant Vendor Weekends

Saturday & Sunday; March to May | 10 am – 4 pm

Shop from featured local nursery vendors for rare plants, perennials, natives, houseplants, trees, and plants for all growing conditions.

Mother's Day Weekend

Saturday & Sunday; May 9-10 | 10 am – 4 pm

Celebrate mom as you stroll through 13 unique garden features, enjoy live musical performances, shop in an outdoor art market, find rare plants for sale in our onsite nursery, and dine from sweet and savory food trucks surrounded by brilliant botanicals at peak-bloom.

Blue Poppy Day

Saturday, May 16 | 10 am – 4 pm

The mystical Himalayan blue poppy, *Meconopsis*, will grace us with its ethereal beauty once again. Walk through a meadow glowing with blooming blue poppies. Enjoy live musical performances, an open-air art market, food trucks, and plant sales in a woodland garden at peak-bloom.

Art in the Garden & Plant Clearance Sale

Free Admission!

Saturday, June 22 | 10 am – 4 pm

Discover local art, grab a bite from food trucks, shop our annual plant clearance sale, and enjoy a beautiful summer day in the garden.

Evening in the Garden

Saturday, August 8 | 5 – 8:30 pm

RSBG volunteers and members are invited to a night of enchanting music, savory cuisine, wine and beer, garden tours, and a rare plant auction.

Fall Clearance & Rare Plant Sale

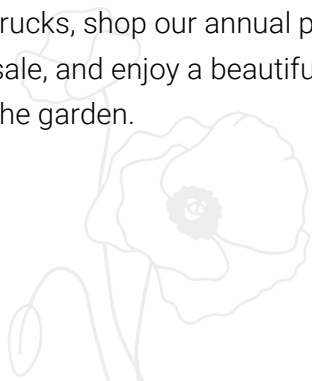
September 30th-October 4th | 10 am – 4 pm

Take advantage of deep discounts and one of a kind finds! Enjoy 50% off plants, plus a special release of rare rhododendron plants and retired stock from our prized rhododendron collection, with more species stocked than ever before!

Fall Foliage Festival

Saturday & Sunday; Nov.7-8 | 10 am – 4 pm

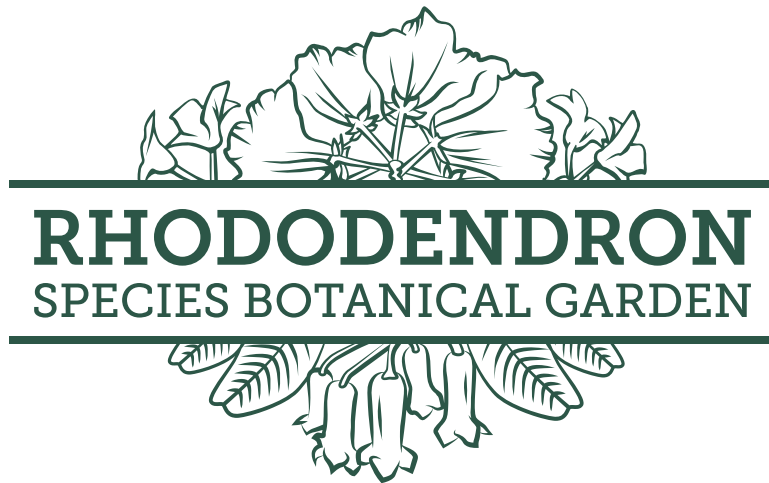
Enjoy a weekend of peak fall color in the garden with guided tours, featured local nursery vendors, a scavenger hunt for kids, food trucks, and more as we celebrate the changing of the seasons.





Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden Press Kit

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Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden Press Kit

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