

The Vireya Venture.

THE VIREYA VENTURE No.5 OCTOBER 1991

This is the last issue of this newsletter for 1991 and the fifth after the introductory issue of 1990. These six issues have only been financially possible by the generosity of friends of Mrs M. Rickard, who have done all the photo-copying at very low cost. Our expenses therefore have been restricted to stationery, postage, P.O.Box rental,telephone calls etc. We hope that this will continue. However that is only half the story - the continuation of this 'Venture' is dependant on the letters we have enjoyed reading from Vireya growers continuing to come in. Your needs,enquiries and troubles are of interest to all, there is still much to learn about growing Vireyas. Your subscription is only part of what we need next year, we need your eperiences too.

There are 83 subscribers now receiving the V.V.,living from Perth to Sydney and from Mareeba to Hobart, covering a very large area and a wide range of climate. Some one out there will have some assistance for your needs.

Drought is certainly a major problem in the North and East this year and with it comes the question of the cost of watering (in Sydney at least) and the quality of the water. We are fortunately not as badly off as some of our friends in the U.S.A. where it,in Southern California has hastened the closure of the Vireya nursery of Mr W.Moynier, who visited us in 1988.
In New Zealand abnormally low temperatures have been experienced in the South of the North Island, although damage to Vireyas has been minimal. Having seen what damage one heavy frost can do here, it could be that a gradual acclimatisation has been helpful there. Here,in Wollongong, our Vireyas have had to be well anchored to remain standing through the high winds that blew in August and September. These are cold and dry, established plants in the garden came to no harm, but plants in containers, even behind shade cloth, had to be tied up.

Remember the address for your letters:

P.O.Box 8, Keiraville, N.S.W. 2500

J.Clyde Smith, Editor.

A letter from Mick and Leone Corker of 'Oakleigh', Clothiers Ck. Rd., Condong, 2484,has been forwarded by Mrs Wendy Snell. They say-

"Dear Wendy and T.V.V. Reader,

Some 2½ years ago, myself and my wife became involved in the retail nursery industry on the Gold Coast. We were getting acquainted with some of the growers at our first trade day, when we came across a display that stopped us in our tracks. Here was a group of large healthy shrubs of varying heights, laden with the most spectacular and striking flowers we had seen, ranging from big bright orange colours through to reds, pinks and lovely golden yellow. Our first reaction was 'We must have some of these beauties in our nursery whatever they are'. It is not often that one comes across a shrub or plant that is so clearly a 'winner'.

Of course this display was attracting considerable attention to say the least. Rather than try and talk to the growers there and then, we quietly picked up a card and some literature and made a mental commitment to call the next day. Well, we made the call and a lasting relationship with Vireyas began. The 'tropical rhododendrons' have certainly enhanced our nursery and attract more attention and comment than any other single variety of plant or shrub. We have some of the varieties, approx.12,all advanced, some 6 and 7 years old, on display in large tubs throughout the nursery. They are all potted in a commercially available 'Azalea and Camellia' potting mix and receive one to two good soakings a week and some foliar waterings during the cooler months. In summer,almost daily waterings, sometimes twice a day for the small potted plants.

They are fed nine month Osmocote and Dynamic Lifter, and occasional foliar feeding. We have had some past problems, mainly mealy bug, anthracnose, mites and rust. We experienced petal blight last winter due to the fact that we carried large numbers of Azaleas at that time. Spraying with Bayleton fixed the problem almost immediately. We have not experienced any failures in the advanced shrubs even with the extremes of weather over the last 12-15 momths. However some of our customers have not been so lucky with a few experiencing problems, even though the labels contain good detailed information , and cultural notes covering most aspects are <u>given</u> out <u>with</u> each purchase. The causes appear to be management relate eg.overwatering causing root rot or dying out through under watering - the latter occuring more around Christmas time.

We planted out in March, 50 Vireyas of varying size and varieties at home in the garden. The soil was built up approx.300mm above ground and mulched after planting with straw to minimize weeds and to contain moisture. All is looking good so far with nearly every plant showing healthy growth.

WE have enjoyed our experience with Vireyas so far and everyone lucky enough to witness a group of tropical rhododendrons in flower together must surely agree they present a magnificent sight. One that would convert even the most reluctant 'Garden Atheist' into a gardening enthusiast.

Mick and Leone Corker.

Wendy adds: Thank you very much for sharing your 'adoption' of Vireyas with us all. It was most enjoyable meeting Leone and Mick at the Queen's Birthday Rhododendron at Montville, as they had travelled a long distance to be there. They were tangible evidence that the T.V.V. grapevine does work!

From Mr and Mrs R.Hampton, of 4 Droquet Court, Kirwain, 4817 :-

"I believe you are interested in the fact that we are growing Vireyas in Townsville and would like regular statistics about their progress - this we are happy to do. Vireyas, although available from one nursery (who buy from Graham Snell), are still difficult to get. We are currently growing four varieties only and have planted them at the eastern end of the house where they get protection from our own garden in late morning and protection from our neighbours trees etc. earlier in the day. Two plants are close to small palms which break the late morning/noon sun and from early afternoon they receive shade from the house. All four plants are in the lawn, three in a raised section (=5") of loam with sand underneath thereby raising them above our natural clay soil.

We fed them 'Maxicrop' on planting out, dug in some compost and placed a thick straw mulch. They are watered about three times a week for about 45minutes on each occasion (micro-jet spray) in our dry season.

Variety	Purchase Date	Height then	Height at 11/8/91.
Tropic Tango	9/6/91	11"	18½"
Golden Charm	9/6/91	10"	17½"
R.jasminiflorum	23/6/91	15"	18"
R.lochae	23/6/91	8"	10"

Rod Hampton.

I was curious about Vireyas being grown at Townsville, as I knew that R.lochae, at one time, was struggling to survive in Cairns Botanic Garden, and the climatic differences could not be very great. It will be interesting to know how they progress through the summer.

Editor.

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From Dr R.M.Withers of 23 Melissa St. Donvale, Victoria 3111.

R. 'Triumphans' or R. triumphans.

I read with interest the article by my good friend Mr. Bill Mearnes in the issue of "The Vireya Venture" of July 1991. This is the first time, to my knowledge, that an article has appeared suggesting that what is grown world wide as the Veitch Hybrid, R. 'Triumphans' is in fact a species. Bill may well be right but I have very grave doubts.

During the many times that I discussed Vireya Rhododendrons with the late Don Stanton, both at his home in Wollongong, at Olinda and at my former home in Hawthorn, Don never expressed the opinion that the plant he had been growing since 1964 was a species. He told me how he discovered the plant among a collection of orchids in a glasshouse in Sydney, and it was my impression that he accepted the opinion that it was the Veitch Hybrid R. 'Triumphans'. Although the orchids in the Sydney glasshouse may have originated in Malaya, Don never suggested that his Vireya Rhododendron also originated in Malaya.

The species R. triumphans and the Veitch Hybrid R. 'Triumphans' are fully documented and described in the article by the late John Womersley and myself entitled "The Non-Malesian Rhododendrons, Sectio Vireya" in "The Rhododendron", Vol. 26,No 2, December 1986.

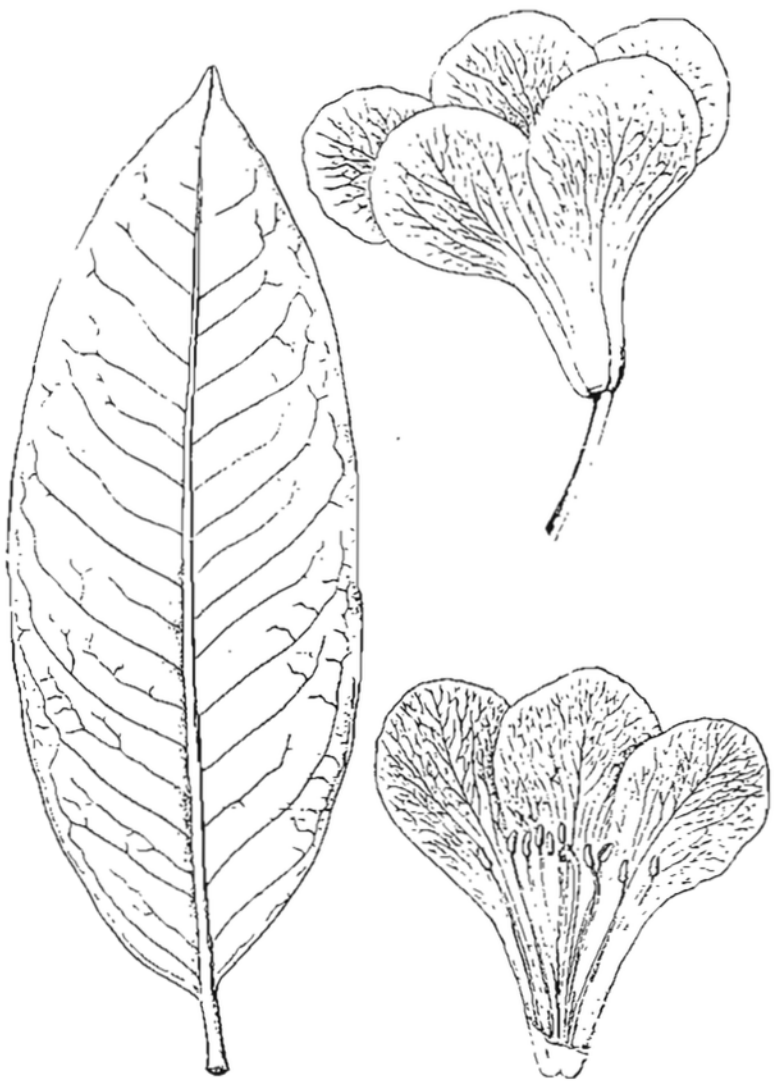
R. triumphans is native to the Honba Mountains at an altitude of 1200-1500m in South Annam, Vietnam, and to my knowledge is not in cultivation outside Vietnam, although Dr. Yersin has commenced to grow it in his garden at Honba.

The hybrid R. 'Triumphans' has scarlet-crimson flowers with larger tubes and smaller corolla lobes than the species R. triumphans. The leaves of the hybrid are typical of those of other Veitch Hybrids.

A further point of interest in Bill's article is that he reports that the plant he describes was first collected by Mr. Adams in Northern Malaya. As R. triumphans, the species is not native to Malaya, this would further support the opinion that Don Stanton's plant was not the species R. triumphans. If in fact it was collected in Northern Malaya, I would suggest that Don's plant is a form of R. longiflorum. I have a slide of R. longiflorum grown by Lyn Craven in the late 1960's grown from seed collected by an unknown person on Kedah Peak, Malaya in 1967 at an altitude of 1220m. This slide shows R. longiflorum with brick-red coloured flowers and it would be hard to distinguish it from what is grown world wide as the Veitch Hybrid R. 'Triumphans'.

Perhaps one day the mystery will finally be solved.

R.M.Withers.



Rhododendron triumphans Yersin et A. Chev.

VIREYA REGISTRATIONS 1991

The following are the latest additions of Australian Vireyas to the International Rhododendron Register for the year ending 30th June 1991.
The numbers in brackets e.g. (37C) refer to the R.H.S. colour chart, but the names of the colours are those of the American Rhododendron Society's 'Universal Color Language' as published in their booklet 'A Contribution Toward Standardization of Color Names in Horticulture' by Huse and Kelly.

Barbara Crouch — R.rhodoleucum x R.konori
Hybridized and raised by Mr T.Lelliot, registered by Mrs Hilda Crouch, Mt.Helen Victoria. Truss of 8 to 16 flowers with 6 lobes, moderate yellowish pink (37C), fading to white mottled pink. Height 1m. First flowered 1988.

Blond Venus — 'Sweet Wendy' x (R.laetum x R.laetum dwarf)
Hybridized and raised by Mr G.L.Snell, Maleny, Queensland. Registered by Mr Ross Macdonald, Montrose, Victoria. Truss of 5 to 7 flowers brilliant yellow (10A) with light yellowish pink (36A) lobes. Height 2m.

Bob's Crowning Glory — R.lochae x R.leucogigas var. Hunstein's Secret.
Hybridized and raised by Dr.J.Rouse, Toorak, Victoria, registered by Mr G.L. Snell. Truss of 6 to 12 flowers,strong purplish pink (55B). Height 1m.

Celebration — R.lochae x R.macgregoriae
Hybridized by Mr T.Lelliot, raised by Mr J.Faragher, Upwey,Victoria, registered by Mr.R.Tonkin, Pomonal, Victoria. Truss of 10 to 15 flowers,deep yellowish pink (44D). Height 1.5m. First flowered 1988

Charming Valentino — 'Saint Valentine' x 'Saint Valentine'
Hybridized by Mr Peter Schick, Fort Bragg, California, registered by Mr G.L. Snell. Truss of 3 to 4 flowers, deep yellowish pink (44D). Height 0.5m.

Cherry Harmony — 'Sweet Wendy'x R.javanicum.
Hybridized by Mr.F.R.Waghorn, Box Hill Nth, Victoria, raised by Mr G.L.Snell, Registered by Mr Ross Macdonald. Truss of 13 flowers, strong red (47B). Height 1m. First flowered 1989.

Christmas Past — R.lochae x R.pseudonitens.
Hybridizer unknown,registered by mr Ross Macdonald. Truss of 5 to 9 flowers, vivid reddish orange (43A). Height 1m. First flowered 1987.

Christmas Present — R.lochae x R.brookeanum var.gracile
Hybridizer unknown, registered by Mr Ross Macdonald. Truss of 4 to 6 flowers, vivid reddish orange (43B). Height 1m. First flowered 1988

Christopher Crouch — R.laetum x R.jasminiflorum
Hybridized and raised by Mr T.Lelliot, registered by Mrs Hilda Crouch. Truss of 9 flowers, yellowish white (158D). Height 1m. First flowered 1985.

Clare Crouch — R.laetum x (possibly) 'Pink Seedling'.
Hybridized and raised by Mr T.Lelliot, registered by Mrs Hilda Crouch. Truss of 5 flowers, pale yellowish pink (29D) with lobes of light purplish pink (55C). Height 1m. First flowered 1989.

Crimson Lightning — R.konori x R.javanicum.
Hybridizer unknown, raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr Ross Macdonald. Truss of 10 to 12 flowers, vivid red (52A). Height 1m. First flowered 1989.

David Crouch — (R.aurigeranum x R.macgregoriae) x R.aurigeranum.
Hybridized and raised by Mr T.Lelliot, registered by Mrs Hilda Crouch. Truss of 6 or 7 flowers, brilliant greenish yellow (2B). Height 1m. First flowered 1990.

Dressed to Kill — R.konori x R.christianae.
Hybridizer unknown, raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr Ross Macdonald. Truss of 10 to 12 flowers, brilliant yellow (14C) with lobes of strong pink (49A). Height 1.2m. First flowered 1989.

Dulcie Lelliot — R.rhodoleucum x (R.aurigeranum x 'Dr.H.Sleumer')
Hybridized and raised by Mr T.Lelliot, registered by Mrs Hilda Crouch. Truss of 5 to 9 flowers, pale yellow (158A), with a pink flush on the outside of the tube. Height 1.2m. First flowered 1987.

Eastern Zanzibar — R.konori x R.zoelleri
Hybridized and raised by Mr W.Moynier,Los Angeles, California,registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 4 or 5 flowers, light yellow,with lobes of deep pink (52C). Height 2m.

Elizabeth Crouch R.konori x R.orbiculatum
Hybridized and raised by Mr T.Lelliot, registered by Mrs Hilda Crouch. Truss of 9 flowers, pale yellowish pink (36D) with lobes of light purplish pink (55C). Height 1m. First flowered 1990.

Fuschia Lady ([R.phaeopeplum x R.lochae] x R.zoelleri) x R.leucogigas var.Hunstein's Secret.
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised and registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 5 to 7 flowers pale yellowish pink (29D) with lobes of deep purplish pink (54B). Height 1m. First flowered 1990.

Gentle Jenny (R.macgregoriae x R.zoelleri) x R.jasminiflorum.
Hybridizer unknown, registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 6 to 8 flowers, pale yellow (158B) with light yellowish pink (36C) lobes.

Glen Borch 'Dr H.Sleumer' x R.laetum.
Hybridized and raised by Mr T.Lelliot, registered by Mrs Hilda Crouch. Truss of 5 flowers, brilliant yellow (10A) with lobes of strong red (47B). Height 1m. First flowered 1985.

Helen's Laughter parentage unknown
Hybridized and raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 5 to 7 flowers vivid reddish orange (30A). Height 1.2m. First flowered 1989.

Highland Arabesque R.orbiculatum x (R.laetum x R.aurigeranum)
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised and registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 4 to 7 flowers, deep purplish pink (66C). Height 1m. First flowered 1986.

Hilda Margaret Crouch (R.laetum x R.zoelleri) x R.konori.
Hybridized and raised by Mr T.Lelliot, registered by Mrs Hilda Crouch. Truss of 5 flowers, light greenish yellow (8C). Height 0.5m. First flowered 1986.

Hosanna R.zoelleri x R.leucogigas.
Hybridizer unknown, raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr D.Moodie, Montrose, Victoria. Truss of 8 flowers, light yellowish pink (19B), inner tube light orange yellow (22B). Height 2m. First flowered 1988.

Iced Primrose R.aurigeranum x R.leucogigas
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse and raised by Mr G.Snell. Registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 7 to 12 flowers, pale yellow (11C), lobes pale yellow (11D) deepening to pale pink (49D). Height 2m. First flowered 1984.

Kay Catchlove (R.laetum x 'Dr H.Sleumer') x (R.aurigeranum x 'Dr H. Sleumer')
Hybridized by Dr.J.Rouse, raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr.R.Macdonald. Truss of 5 or 6 flowers, brilliant yellow (15C) with lobes of vivid reddish orange (30A). Height 1m. First flowered 1988.

La-De-Da R.christianae x R.jasminiflorum.
Hybridized by Mr Don Stanton, raised by Mr G.Snell and registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 6 to 10 flowers pale yellow green (155A) with lobes of moderate pink (49B) shading to pale purplish pink (56B). Height 1.5m. First flowered 1975.

Lolly Willows R.konori x R.laetum
Hybridized by Mr W.Mearns, Mt.Pleasant, N.S.W. raised by Mr.G.Snell and registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 13 flowers vivid yellow (14B) fading to lobe edge. Height 2m. First flowered 1990.

Lovey R.Konori x ([R.phaeopeplum x R.lochae] x R.zoelleri)
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised and registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 5 or 6 flowers, pale yellow (11C) with lobes pale purplish pink (56B). Height 2m. First flowered 1988.

Melbourne Cup (R.laetum x 'Dr H.Sleumer) x (R.aurigeranum x 'Dr H. Sleumer}
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 9 flowers brilliant yellow (21C). Height 1.5m. First flowered 1990.

Mrs Elizabeth Miller [(R.phaeopeplum x R.lochae) x R.leucogigas] x R.laetum.
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 6 to 10 flowers light yellowish pink with strong pink (52D) lobes. Height 1.2m. First flowered 1988.

Orange Harmony 'Sweet Wendy' x R.javanicum
Hybridized by Mr F.Waghorn, raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 7 flowers, strong orange (25B), lobes vivid yellowish pink (30C). Height 1m. First flowered 1989.

Pacific Moonrise R.sessilifolium x R.laetum
Hybridized and raised by Dr J.Rouse and registered by Mr A.B.Raper,The Patch, Victoria. Truss of 8 to 10 flowers, vivid yellow (12A) deepening to vivid yellow (14B). Height 0.6m. First flowered 1990.

Pacific Shower (R.lochae x R.macgregoriae) x R.christianae.
Hybridized by Mr Don Stanton, raised by Mr Lou Searle, Morton Creek, N.S.W. and registered by Mrs Sylvia Saperstein, Mullumbimby, N.S.W. Truss of 10 flowers vivid yellow (15B) with lobes vivid reddish orange (33A). Height 1m. First flowered 1983.

Pacific Sundown 'Apricot Nectar' (unregistered hybrid) x R.zoelleri.
Hybridizer unknown,raised by Mr L.Searle,registered by Mrs S.Saperstein. Truss of 8 flowers, light yellow (10C) with lobes of vivid reddish orange (41A). Height 2m.

Patrizia Del Roma [(R.phaeopeplum x R.lochae) x R.leucogigas] x R.laetum.
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised by Mr.G.Snell, registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 10 to 14 flowers,light greenish yellow (4B) deepening to strong orange, (30D) with lobes of brilliant orange yellow (23B). Height 1.5m. First flowered 1989.

Pennywhistle R.macgregoriae x R.bagobonum.
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised and registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 3 to 5 flowers of vivid orange (28B). Height 0.6m. First flowered 1986

Personality [(R.phaeopeplum x R.lochae) x R.zoelleri] x R.konori.
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 5 flowers,vivid red (52A) fading to strong red (51B). Height 1.5m. First flowered 1990.

Pink Lightning R.javanicum x R.konori
Hybridizer unknown, raised by Mr G.Snell and registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 17 flowers ,vivid red (52A). Height 1.5m. First flowered 1990.

Pink Sally [(R.phaeopeplum x R.lochae) x R.leucogigas] x R.laetum.
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 6 flowers, light orange yellow (16C) lobes of deep pink (52C). Height 1.5m. First flowered 1989.

Pretty Cotton Candy R.laetum x 'Pink Creeper'.
Hybridizer unknown, raised and registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 6 to 8 flowers yellowish white/with lobes of deep pink (47D). Height 1m.

Rouseabout R.aurigeranum x R.christianae.
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised and registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 5 to 8 flowers, vivid yellow (14A), lobes of strong orange (25A). Height 1.5m. First flowered 1987.

Shantung Pink [(R.phaeopeplum x R.lochae) x R.leucogigas] x R.laetum.
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised and registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 8 to 10 flowers, strong pink/with throat strong yellowish pink (32C). Height 2m. First flowered 1988.

Star Shower (R.laetum x R.aurigeranum) x R.retusum.
Hybridized and raised by Dr J.Rouse, registered by Mr A.Raper. Truss of 7 to 9 flowers, strong reddish orange (40C). Height 0.6m. First flowered 1987.

Tom Lelliot (R.laetum x R.zoelleri) x R.konori
Hybridized and raised by Mr.T.Lelliot, registered by Mrs Hilda Crouch. Truss of 7 flowers, light yellow (10B) with lobes of deep purplish pink (55A). Height 0.5m. First flowered 1990

Torrid Affair (R.zoelleri x R.konori) x R.brookeanum.
Hybridized by Mr J.Swisher, Miami, Florida, raised by Dr J.Rouse, and registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 12 to 14 flowers brilliant yellow (20A) with outer tube vivid reddish orange (33A) and lobes vivid red (44A). Height 2m. First flowered 1990.

Vanilla Cream R.konori x R.aurigeranum
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised by Mr.G.Snell, registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 15 flowers vivid yellow (12A) with lobes of light yellow (11B). Height 2m. First flowered 1988.

Wee Willie Winkie R.magregoriae x R.stenophyllum.
Hybridized and raised by Mr G.Snell, registered by Mr R.Macdonald. Truss of 2 flowers, vivid reddish orange (33B). Height 0.5m. First flowered 1988.

White Rum 'Dr H.Sleumer' x R.konori
Hybridizer unknown, raised and registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 5 to 8 flowers, pale yellow green (155A), lobes greenish white (155C). Height 1.5m. First flowered 1986.

Wild Redhead R.retusum x R.javanicum
Hybridized by Dr J.Rouse, raised and registered by Mr G.Snell. Truss of 10 to 12 Flowers, vivid red (44A). Hgt 1.5m. First flowered 1988.

Prior to publication of this list (which does not include any overseas registrations - which will follow later) there had been 128 Vireya hybrids named, of these 69 had been of Australian. The 49 now listed here brings the total of Australians to 118. This is a very large increase and includes five species as parents, that have not been listed before. These are R.sessilifolium, R.bagobonum, R.rhodoleucum, R.pseudonitens, and R.orbiculatum.
The descriptions of these new hybrids are minimal and more detail is required for registration. Forms for this purpose may be obtained from Mr F.Waghorn, 60 Dunloe Avenue, Box Hill Nth. Victoria 3129, who is the Australian registrar for the Royal Horticultural Society which handles all rhododendron registrations.

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Also from Dr Withers, a note to tell us that the Rev.Norman Cruttwell is now convalescing in England at the College of St.Barnabas, Blackberry Lane, Lingfield, Surrey, RH7 6NJ United Kingdom. He went there from Townsville after suffering a pulmonary embolism in P.N.G. which necessitated tis immediate transfer to a Townsville hospital. He has written that he is improving but is likely to be there permanently.

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There have been several enquiries for the book 'Rhododendrons of Sabah', by G.Argent, A.Lamb, A.Phillips, and S.Collenette. This is a technical but very easily read description of 36 species of Vireyas found in Sabah, with particularly fine illustrations.
It is available from the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, EH3 5LR Scotland, United Kingdom, for six pounds Stg. postpaid.

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While on the subject of books, in future, copies of 'Vireya Rhododendrons' will be supplied by Mr. N.G.Webster, 15 Rookwood Street, North Balwyn, Victoria 3104, but if there are any enquiries that I can assist with, I shall be pleased to do so.

J.Clyde Smith

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The last two pages of Table 2 will be in the January issue, ran out of space this time with all the new registrations - but they are too interesting to leave out.