



**Rhododendron
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Bulletin 1973

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**Société
Canadienne
du
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EDITORIAL COMMENT

The greater the difficulties, the greater the challenge to overcome them. Not one of us, members of this young society is under the illusion that we have an easy road to building a strong, cohesive membership. Those of us whose only contact is this occasional bulletin must be especially aware of this fact.

Nevertheless, all signs point to steady progress. In our New Members list it is inspiring to see names from such widely separated places as Prince George, B.C.; Winnipeg, Manitoba; The Hague, Netherlands; Southampton, England; two more members in British Columbia, and one more from New Brunswick and one from Yarmouth, Nova Scotia.

From the outset it has been the hope of your directors that the Society could gain international recognition. We are in correspondence with two enthusiasts in Japan, where their Rhododendron Society has been started about the same time as ours. Mr. Hideo Sazuki writes "Japan is a country with rhododendrons being abundant, both in cultivars and species, yet we formed our Rhododendron Society as late as last year for which I am serving on the steering committee. Though we have 250 members the situation of our Society is still in a very primitive stage, and there is a long way to go to raise it to the International level."

From this it is evident we are not the only ones wishing to reach "hands across the seas". By broadening our own horizons we are doing the same for people in other lands.

Our Second Annual Meeting & Flower Show is to be held at the Fairview Mall in Toronto on June 1st and 2nd. This is the first Society event of importance to be held in Metropolitan Toronto. The Mall is very well suited to the occasion and purpose and the Society officers hope that all members who can, will rally to make the occasion an outstanding success.

The Flower Show prospectus enclosed outlines the events of the evening of June 1st, the Show Competition, Annual Meeting and field trip to the Woodland Rhododendron Garden in Mississauga. We have the active support of the Garden Club of Toronto, whose flower arranging committee will be doing a number of their famous flower arrangements to be in display in the shopping centre, inviting shoppers to visit the Flower Show in the auditorium.

Bring your flower contribution to add to the display and don't forget to bring your friends! This show will be a unique opportunity to introduce rhododendrons to a large number of people.

RHODODENDRON LAPPONICUM

Dr. J. B. Brueckner Saint John, New Brunswick

Hardly half a dozen *Rhododendron* species are native to Canada. *Rhododendron lapponicum* is one of them.

This plant is almost circumpolar in its distribution, occurring in boreal forests and tundras of Europe and America, probably also northwest Siberia and sporadically in more southern latitudes (Mount Washington). It belongs to the lepidote (scaly or small leaved) group of rhododendrons. According to botanical descriptions it is a low growing, compact, much branched shrublet, a few inches to one foot tall at the most. With its prostrate growth pattern it shares a characteristic with many arctic and high alpine plants, a characteristic which enables these plants to take advantage of the snow cover for added natural winter protection. Leaves are 1/3 to 1/2 inch long, elliptic, oblong, densely scaly. Flowers are approximately 1/2 in diameter, purple in color and occur in few-flowered terminal clusters.

My interest in this plant was aroused by a letter of Dietrich G. Hobbie, of Northern Germany, the well known hybridizer and grower of rhododendrons. In his letter he told me that on one of his visits to the Canadian Arctic, in the vicinity of the Great Slave Lake, he stumbled upon a knee-deep stand of familiar looking plants with purple flowers. On closer examination and to his great surprise, these plants turned out to be rhododendrons, apparently a rather tall, erect form of *R.lapponicum*, growing up to almost 30 inches.

A study of climatic conditions of the Great Slave Lake area reveals that temperatures may drop as low as 70°F below zero (-60°C). Extremely cold, drying winds are no exception to the Canadian Arctic. The mean annual snowfall in this area is only 40 inches with probably substantially less lying on the ground at any time during the winter. This means that for a good part, and probably even for the whole winter, the tops of the plants stay above the snow cover and are fully exposed to the elements.

Indeed, this form of *R.lapponicum* must possess exceptional cold hardiness and is probably hardier than the type itself, which as a rule remains under the snow cover during the winter. Therefore, I decided to try to obtain this plant for a closer examination of its requirements, its potential as an ornamental garden plant and for hybridization experiments. Obviously, the plants would have to be collected in the wild. In this I am greatly indebted to Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, Fort Smith, N.W.T. She was able to collect three fairly well grown plants and get these to Saint John. Though one of the plants died (it had virtually no roots and could not establish itself), the other two took the trip and the tremendous change in the environment without any apparent ill effects.

All this happened in June, 1969. Since then, on the basis of my observations, I can agree with Mr. Hobbie that this form of *R.lapponicum* is quite undemanding and grows well under ordinary garden cultivation, provided that the usual re-

quirements for a *Lapponicum* rhododendron are fulfilled. We must remember, however, that there is winter in Saint John, from mid-November until mid-April. The average daily maximum temperature in January is 28°F, the average daily minimum is 11°F and the absolute minimum measured was -27°F. Moreover, the summers are cool, moist and foggy with an average daily maximum for July of 69°F and an average daily minimum of 54°F. At Mr. Hobbie's place, who has some of the specimens in cultivation, the summers are similarly cool. It needs to be established how much heat tolerance this form has.

In the first one or two years my two plants produced good green growth and got themselves established, but did not set flower buds. One of the plants flowered here in Saint John for the first time last year and now both plants are fairly well budded.

It is my impression that the flowers are somewhat larger and the leaves are somewhat longer (3/4 inch) on this form than on the type. Young shoots, from around the base of the plant, may grow 3 or 4 inches in one season. The terminal shoots, on the older branches, grow 1/2 inch to nearly one inch every year. The larger of the two plants is now well over 20 inches tall. The most **distinguishing** characteristic of the form is, however, the erect and upright growth pattern. The multiple, straight and bare stems with their top growth are not unlike that of a "bonsai forest" in appearance.

For one who is used to growing rhododendrons in a temperate climate, the great hurry which *R.lapponicum* is in during the growing season is a most astonishing feature. Flowering here takes place around June 1st. The seed capsules are well developed and flower buds for next year's bloom are set by the end of June. The capsules appear to be ripe by the end of July and split open early in August. This plant truly is making the best out of a short Arctic summer, since green growth is also completed in July. I have never seen a second flush of growth on the plants. From early August on, these rhododendrons are just simply putting in time until the frosts arrive. Then a miracle is performed, the miracle of survival. There is not a more dead looking plant in my garden than *R.lapponicum* in winter. The leaves are quite dehydrated, shrivelled and hardly noticeable. They do not revive during mild spells in the winter, as the leaves especially of our broad leaved Rhododendrons do, as soon as the temperature climbs over the 30°F mark. Only in spring do the plants come to life again, but it takes several weeks in April and early May until they completely recover. Perhaps, the secret of their survival lies in this drastic dehydration.

The plants which I have received in June of 1969 were in full flower on arrival. I was able to collect some pollen at that time and again, when one of the plants flowered, last year. I used this pollen for making a number of crosses, perhaps thirty or more. It is not easy to make crosses with *R.lapponicum* and the crosses

are often not successful, possibly because this form is most likely a tetraploid. However, in some of the offspring, which resulted from crosses with species (or hybrids) of the *Campylogynum*, *Lapponicum*, *Lepidotum* and *Saluenense* series, hybridity is evident.

R.lapponicum is a Canadian native, one of the treasures of our Arctic flora. Though not unattractive, it is a modest representative of the genus. It can certainly not compete with the beauty of many of the exotic imports to this country. However, it does have something which the imports do not have and which makes it of great value to Canadian gardeners; it has extreme cold resistance. Even more important, it might be possible to combine its hardiness with the desirable qualities of other lepidotes to bring more color and variety to gardens in cold climates.

A FAST AND ACCURATE PROPAGATION METHOD

R. Behring, Librarian Montreal

While reading one of the recent yearbooks of the Deutsche Rhododendron Gesellschaft, I came across an article using boric acid as a propagation stimulant. The trials were made in Germany, using small amounts of cuttings (about 10 per variety) and a good cross section of many types of rhododendrons including normally very hard to root red hybrids. A root development of between 90- 100% per variety was achieved in all cases. Here is a summary of the method used

Tender new growth about 2" long is taken at the middle to end of May. A one inch sliver of bark is removed from one side of the stem as far as the cambium. The whole cutting is then immersed in a solution made by mixing 1 ccm of (saturated boric acid solution) and 4 litres of RAINWATER, for a period of 24 hours. The growing medium is an equal mixture of peat moss and perlite all well moistened. Maximum humidity is needed, a plastic tent enclosing the mixture is best. The planted cuttings should be in maximum light, but not direct sunlight. The temperature should be held at 78°F. After three weeks all cuttings should have developed a rootball.

It almost sounds too good to be true. Guess who is trying this method in the coming growing season?

VANDUSEN BOTANICAL GARDENS

R. Roy Forster, Curator Vancouver, B.C.

The people of Vancouver are proud of their Public Parks. Sensitivity to the need for recreational space has been strongly featured since the founding of the City. The newest response to this need is the VanDusen Botanical Gardens.

In 1966, a group of interested citizens held meetings, discussing the need for a Botanical Garden in Vancouver, to serve the city, the lower Mainland, and the entire Province of British Columbia. As a result, Dr. H. R. Fletcher, then Regius Keeper of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, was invited to Vancouver to study the proposed location. By all accounts he was enchanted by the site. Comprising 55.5 acres of high land near the heart of the City, it commands impressive vistas of the City itself, the coastal mountains beyond and is within easy walking distance of Queen Elizabeth Park. The latter asset suggests a green-belt link, thus connecting the Botanical Garden with the famed Bloedel Conservatory, Quarry Garden, and Arboretum.

In January 1971, an agreement was signed between the Government of British Columbia, the City of Vancouver, and the Vancouver Foundation resulting in funds totalling three million dollars being made available to purchase and develop the site. After purchase, the site was transferred to the Vancouver Park Board, and planning initiated by Superintendent S. S. Lefeaux and Deputy Superintendent W. C. Livingstone. The garden was named in honor of one of Vancouver's leading citizens, Mr. W. J. VanDusen, President of the Vancouver Foundation.

The basic concept for the garden is educational — to convey the joy in direct observation of growing plants. The garden will show the fascinating array of interrelationships within the Plant Kingdom and demonstrate the importance of these relationships in the maintenance of harmoniously balanced life systems, both environmental and personal. Aesthetic and utilitarian uses of plants will be featured. For example, landscaping demonstrations of small gardens and vegetable cultivation.

All age groups will be catered to. The very young, in whom an awareness of the value of plant life is so vital for the future; adults, needing information on home gardening, and the Senior Citizens who must be encouraged to feel part of the "growing" community.

Another aspect of the garden will be a testing and evaluation program for cultivars and species new to the Vancouver area. With such a benign climate, the opportunities in this field are vast. This work will of course be coupled with an advisory service to the public, providing information on plants and all manner of gardening problems.

The focal point of the garden is a grouping of small lakes and rocky promontories, which provides a variety of environments for attractively arranged plant collec-

tions. Heather, heaths, and dwarf conifers will be featured, not only for their undoubted affinity with rockwork, but also because of their perfect scale relationships for modern landscape use.

The Rhododendron and Azalea collections are well underway. These are located near the southern boundary of the Garden and take up almost the entire length of the site. The Rhododendrons are arranged according to hybrid ancestry, which makes the planting informative as well as ornamental. The deciduous azalea collection is arranged to show the history of the development of hybrids. Thus the species ancestors can be seen first, followed by the first hybrids and by the progression to the most advanced modern hybrids.

Also of interest to Rhododendron fanciers is the Ericaceous Garden — an area devoted mainly to heathers and heaths. The theme is an exposed rocky moorland, including peat bog areas to provide a habitat for *Kalmias*, *Andromedas* and similar plants. When complete this garden will have an information centre telling the interesting ecological and cultural story of the Ericaceae.

The concept and design for the garden is the work of William Livingstone, Deputy Superintendent of Parks. The result is an interesting and varied site, in style definitely within the English landscape School tradition. Rockwood is strongly featured in the garden. Mainly basalt conglomerate and sandstone, worked into several interesting features including an impressive glacial ravine and an equally impressive rock grotto. With progress on schedule, the garden will be opened to the public in 1975.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HYBRID DECIDUOUS AZALEAS

PART II

Ken Duncan Don Mills, Ontario

In Part I of this article, I reviewed the Ghent and Mollis hybrid azaleas and listed the nine species which were mainly used to develop the various strains of the deciduous hybrids. These are all members of the Series Azalea, Sub Series Luteum and are: from North America, *R. arboreum*, *calendulaceum*, *nudiflorum*, *occidentale*, *speciosum*, *viscosum*, and perhaps to a lesser degree, *bakeri*, *prunifolium*, and *canescens*. From Europe: *R. luteum*. From Japan: *R. japonicum*. From China: *R. molle*.

Occidentalis Hybrids

These are crosses of *R. occidentale* and *R. molle*, and *R. occidentale* and certain mollis hybrids (*molle* x *japonicum*) by A. Waterer senior of Knapp Hill, England

and M. Koster of Holland in the 1870's and 1880's. In 1894 one of these hybrids was named *R.albicans*. In 1901 Koster introduced several clones, such as: *Delicatissima* — cream, rose-tinted with yellow blotch; *Exquisita* — creamy white, flushed yellow with yellow blotch; *Graciosa* — pale rose with orange blotch; *Irene Koster* — pure rose pink with small yellow blotch; *Superba* — pale pink, frilled with orange blotch.

Occidentalis hybrids are vigorous and grow up to 8 feet tall. The large trusses of very fragrant, funnel shaped flowers usually carry the orange yellow blotch of *R.occidentale*. The flowers are 2-3 in. across, 6-12 in a truss, and appear in late May — early June. The plants should be shaded from the strong sun from mid-day to mid-afternoon. I have successfully grown all plants listed above on their own roots.

Rustica flore-pleno Hybrids

Crosses believed to be between Double Ghent hybrids and Mollis hybrids were called *Mixtum* hybrids by Rehder. They are now commonly called *Rustica flore-pleno* hybrids. In the early 1890's, Chas. Vuylsteke of Belgium obtained some plants from Louis de Smet, also of Belgium. All plants had double flowers. Their origin may be Double Ghent hybrids crossed with *R.japonicum*. Other growers may also have raised doubles included in this group. Among the plants introduced by Vuylsteke are: *Byron* (1888) white, tinged carmine rose; *Il Tasso* (1892) orange red; *Norma* (1888) rose red with salmon glow and *Phidias* (1888) light orange yellow.

Rustica flore-pleno hybrids are upright and tall, with a more compact habit than the Double Ghents. The flowers are all double, are larger than the Double Ghents (about 1-2 in. in diameter), and are fragrant. They bloom in late May or early June, and have no seed heads — no deadheading required! Own root plants are best.

The Knap Hill Hybrids

The Knap Hill strain of hybrid deciduous azaleas originated at the Knap Hill Nursery in England. It was further developed by the Goldsworth Nursery (Sloccock), England, and by the late Lionel de Rothschild at the Exbury Estate near Southampton, England. Also, the late Edgar Stead of the Ilam Estate, Christchurch, New Zealand, the late P. D. Williams of Lanarth, Cornwall and the Royal Horticultural Society at Wisley, England have produced plants under this classification. Work on this strain is also being done in other parts of the world — Canada, U.S.A. and various European countries. However, the Knap Hill hybrids are usually divided into four main groups: Knap Hill, Sloccock, Exbury and Ilam. Some English catalogues are now also listing the plants from Wisley as (R.H.S.) in the Knap Hill hybrid section.

Knap Hill Azaleas Between 1850 and 1880 Anthony Waterer Senior of the Knap Hill Nursery in England, crossed *R.molle* with fine forms and hybrids of *R.calendulaceum* and also with certain Ghent hybrids. The results were a great advance on any existing hybrids. The flowers were larger, more square, and the colours stronger than existing Ghents.

Between 1870 and 1890, these seedlings were crossed with *R.japonicum*, *occidentale*, and *arborescens*, and perhaps one or two other species. Therefore, the Knap Hill azaleas are a mixture of at least the nine species listed at the beginning of this article. Hybridizing of this strain has continued at this nursery right up to the present day. Many fine plants have been produced with both single and double flowers. The current nursery manager is Donald Waterer, who carries on the family tradition. He is a very fine chap, in my estimation. The list of first class rhododendrons and azaleas that he and his forebearers have produced is most impressive.

The Knap Hill azaleas grow 4-6 feet tall and 4-5 feet across. A few are more spreading than others. The flowers are thicker and wider (3-4 in.) than other hybrids. Some of the trusses have up to thirty flowers. The colours range white, cream, yellow, pink, rose, red, and some bicolours. The flowers will stay fresh longer if they are protected from the sun in the heat of the day. In the spring, many of the plants have bronze young foliage which sets off the flowers handsomely. The autumn foliage is often brilliant or sometimes bright browns or purples.

It may be worth pointing out that some plants attributed to other breeders of Knap Hill azaleas were actually produced at Knap Hill, sold as seedlings, and named by the purchaser.

Some of the hybrids show a predominant influence of certain species. Several of the early (mid-May) hybrids suggest *R.molle* and *R.japonicum* as parents: Marion Merriman (1925) very large rich yellow, spreading: Cockatoo — large flame apricot; Lapwing (1935) straw yellow with pink tips.

Other early plants belong to the group *R.(molle x calendulaceum)*: Firecrest (1944) orange red; Redshank (1947) tangerine orange.

Large pure whites tinged with pale pink have *R.occidentale* predominating. Those listed below flower in late May: Avocet — white tinged pale pink; Toucan (1941) pale cream with pink margins and saffron blotch.

Salmon pink and salmon reds are probably from *R.speciosum* and *R.occidentale* and flower in late May or early June. Examples are: Golden Eye (1944) deep vermilion and pink; Ruddy Duck (1941) pale orange red with yellow blotch.

Deep blood reds with funnel shaped or broadly tubular flowers have strong indications of *R. speciosum*, *nudiflorum* and *viscosum*, and flower in late May - early June, such as: Knap Hill Red (1948) deep intense red; Satan, deep geranium red; *Redstart* (1941) *geranium* like with orange blotch.

Other fine Knap Hills I can recommend are: George Reynolds — enormous butter yellow, late May; Golden Oriole (1939) yellow, very vigorous, late May; Hiawatha (1952) orange red, large yellow blotch, mid May; Sylphides (1950) large pale carmine fading to white, late May.

A late blooming azalea from the cross *bakeri* x *occidentale* is named Kilauea, orange red with orange blotch. In the newer catalogues, Knap Hill lists some very late azaleas — July and August — from the cross *R. prunifolium* x *occidentale*, in various shades of pink-apricot.

Double Knap Hill Azaleas The Knap Hill Nursery has produced quite a few double forms and is releasing more each year. The early ones are thought to be crosses of Double Ghents with *R. occidentale* and *R. viscosum*. They have large flowers and bloom in late May - early June. Some of these are Colin Kenrick, flesh pink; Homebush, deep carmine; Paramount, yellow; Whitethroat (1941) pure white.

Slocock Azaleas In 1926 Walter Slocock of the Goldsworth Old Nursery (a few miles from Knap Hill) purchased a number of fine hybrids from Hosea Waterer II of Knap Hill and introduced them to the gardening public. Included are: Fireglow — orange vermillion, late May or early June; Gog — nasturtium orange, late May; Homebush (named by Hosea Waterer II) double carmine, late May; Persil — white with yellow blotch, late May; Satan — deep geranium red, June; Tunis — orange red, late May.

One of Slocock's own hybrids is called Devon — rose pink.

Exbury Azaleas In the 1935 Year Book of the Rhododendron Association (of Great Britain — now a group within the Royal Horticultural Society), Lionel de Rothschild, of Exbury, tells how he obtained his first Knap Hill azaleas. Apparently Anthony Waterer II, the then owner of the Knap Hill Nursery, being an eccentric bachelor, used to hoard his best azaleas. When asked to part with some of his treasures, he would say that they were marked for his own garden, which consisted only of a few square yards of herbaceous plants and vegetables, but never an azalea. Finally, about 50 years ago, he allowed a few plants to go to J. C. Williams of Caerhays Castle, Cornwall, P. D. Williams of Lanarth, Cornwall, and to Mr. de Rothschild of Exbury.

Among the plants purchased by Mr. de Rothschild was a large yellow azalea called George Reynolds (see above) and some unnamed orange ones with a deep blotch. These were hybrids of *R. molle* x *calendulacēum* x *occidentale*. From these

he produced Hotspur, a large orange red, which won the Award of Merit (R.H.S.) in 1934.

As new seedlings developed, Mr. de Rothschild selected two parent plants of the pinks, the reds, the yellows, and of other groups. He says in his article, "A red on an orange may give an orange red, but it is better to make pinks with pinks, whites with whites, yellows with yellows, than to mix colours, and if this is done the colours come more or less true. A molle-japonicum hybrid such as Floradora can be crossed with Anthony Waterer's yellows or reds to give good results, but the better the parent, the better its offspring, and it is no good crossing a small flowered hybrid with a medium sized one and expecting large flowers."

Mr. de Rothschild destroyed thousands of his seedlings, keeping only the ones chosen for size, vigour, colour, and texture. He admired the square shape of the Knap Hills and sought to increase the size of the flowers. He used the species *R.molle* to improve on these plants. The flower trusses on some clones approach the size of rhododendrons. Cross breeding two individual plants of the same colour will produce seedlings coming remarkably true.

A selection of some of the most outstanding clones are: Basilick — deep cream, golden flare, late; Berry Rose — large rose pink, yellow blotch, midseason; Brazil (1934) tangerine red, frilled flowers, midseason; Cecile — very large salmon pink, yellow flare, midseason; Gibraltar (1947) large frilled orange red, midseason; Golden Sunset — yellow with orange blotch, midseason; Princess Royal — huge white flushed pink, yellow blotch, early; Royal Lodge (1947) deep vermillion red, very late.

Exbury azaleas grow from 4 to 6 feet in height and 3 to 4 feet wide. As with the Knap Hill azaleas, some develop bronze tints in the young foliage and brilliant colour in the fall. The blooming time is mid May to the end of June. The flowers are square, rather flat, sometimes frilled, and from 2 to 4 inches across. The colour range is the same as the Knap Hills with the exception of a coppery orange colour lacking in the Knap Hills. It is worth noting that, in the red colour range, the deeper the flower colour, the smaller the flower.

Ilam Azaleas About 1917, Mr. Edgar Stead of the Ilam Estate, Christchurch, New Zealand, obtained some seed of the American species azaleas from Prof. C. S. Sargent of the Arnold Arboretum at Boston, U.S.A. He hybridized these species and the results of these crosses were eventually crossed with some Knap Hill azaleas. In 1930 Mr. Stead visited England where he made crosses at Exbury at the invitation of Lionel de Rothschild. It was Mr. de Rothschild's custom to ask his guests to make crosses in his garden and then, when the resulting seed was ripe, to send this to these same people, each one receiving the result of his (or her) individual

Above A fine old hybrid (A.M. 1891) Norma has light rose-red flowers with a salmon glow and is fragrant.

Below Satan, classed as a Slocock hybrid, is a very deep geranium red. *Photo: Kentville*



cross. Mr. Stead, of course, received his after his return to New Zealand. He used the seedlings from these crosses to further his own line of hybrids.

Like Mr. de Rothschild, Mr. Stead bred to colour, i.e. red to red, pink to pink, yellow to yellow etc. After many years of effort, he finally developed the Ilam strain of azaleas. The flowers are very large, up to 4½ in. with ruffled edges. They are quite fragrant and bloom heavily as they set few seeds.

These plants have performed well in the colder parts of the U.S. and are just becoming available in Canada. Many of the plants are still not named but have a number or an indication of colour, usually preceded by the word Ilam; e.g. Ilam (number) or Ilam Frilled Red. Named plants available in the near future are: Canterbury — orange red with golden blotch; Copper Cloud — frilled coppery orange; Darkie — dark red; Medford Yellow — chrome yellow; Orange Ball — compact, frilled orange; Supreme Scarlet.

The habit of these plants is similar to the Knap Hills already mentioned.

Other Knap Hill Hybrids A. M. Williams of Caerhays Castle, Cornwall, produced Magog (1928) orange, similar to Hotspur. The Royal Horticultural Society at Wisley, Surrey, England, has produced hybrids known as (R.H.S.) or (Exbury-R.H.S.) hybrids such as: Frome — clear orange, bronze foliage; Medway — enormous pink; Tay — large yellow, orange blotch. In the U.S., Bovee hybrids include: Goldflake — bright yellow; Balls of Fire — large scarlet. Hybrids are also being produced in various countries wherever these deciduous azaleas can be grown.

Deciduous azaleas require the same soil conditions as other rhododendrons. It is not the purpose of this article to review these requirements. Given a suitable growing medium and protection from high winds and hot sun, these azaleas will prove easier to grow than the evergreen rhododendrons. The wealth of bloom is unsurpassed by any flowering shrub.

To ensure a maximum of bloom each year, the flower heads should be removed immediately after they fade. This prevents seed setting and promotes the forming of flower buds for the following year's bloom.

Own root plants are more reliable than grafted stock and should be obtained whenever possible. These are propagated by layers or from cuttings. If the plant is killed to the ground by either an accident or the weather, the roots will send up new shoots of the same hybrid concerned. These plants are also more vigorous and should live for many years. In fact, a healthy deciduous azalea should outlast the grower and become a living heirloom.

RHODODENDRON AND AZALEA WINTER HARDINESS EVALUATION

D. L. Craig Kentville, Nova Scotia

One of the principal goals of the Kentville Research Station's rhododendron and azalea program is the evaluation of species and varieties for hardiness of flower buds and foliage. Many of the plants on test are now mature, making it possible to record reliable data. The following is a list of species and varieties that have flowered well in each of the past 5 years. The extreme minimum temperatures (°F) during this period were as follows:

	December	January	February	March
1967	0	-3	-11	-3
1968	0	-8	-9	-1
1969	7	5	1	7
1970	-9	-2	-1	8
1971	-1	-11	-17	10

Azalea Species	Hardiness ¹	Quality ²	Average date ³ of full bloom
<i>R.atlanticum</i>	H-2	3/3	June 15
<i>R.bakeri</i>	H-2	4/3	July 6
<i>R.calendulaceum</i>	H-1	4/4	June 22
<i>R.canadense</i>	H-1	2/3	May 23
<i>R.japonicum</i>	H-1	3/2	June 11
<i>R.luteum</i>	H-1	3/3	June 9
<i>R.roseum</i>	H-1	3/4	June 10
<i>R.schluppenbachi</i>	H-2	4/4	May 31
<i>R.vaseyi</i>	H-1	4/4	June 4
Knap Hill Hybrid Azaleas			
Berryrose		4/3	June 17
Brazil		4/3	June 19
Fawley		4/3	June 20
Gibraltar		4/4	June 15
Golden Dream		3/3	June 11
Knap Hill White		4/3	June 19
Scarlet Pimpernel		3/3	June 20
Silver Slippers		4/4	June 19
Toucan		3/3	June 17
Evergreen Azalea			
Mildred Mae		3/4	June 5

Above Scarlet Pimpernel blooms freely. It is a red
Knap Hall hybrid azalea. *Photo: Kentville*

Below Close-up of Exbury hybrid Ginger, showing frilled
florets. Colour is brownish orange. *Photo: Kentville*



Rhododendron Species	Hardiness ¹	Quality ²	Average date ³ of full bloom
<i>R.carolinianum</i>	H-1	4/4	June 7
<i>R.catawbiense</i> var. <i>compactum</i>	H-1	3/4	June 18
<i>R.catawbiense</i> var <i>album</i> (Glass)	H-1	3/4	June 17
<i>R.maximum</i>	H-1	2/2	July 15
<i>R.mucronulatum</i>	H-2	4/3	May 12
<i>R.russatum</i>	H-2	4/4	May 28
<i>R.smirnowii</i>	H-2	2/4	June 13
Rhododendron Varieties			
Album Elegans	H-1	4/3	June 21
America	H-1	3/2	June 16
Blue Peter	H-2	4/3	June 14
Boule de Neige	H-1	4/5	June 9
Boursault	H-1	4/4	June 14
Caroline	H-2	3/3	June 15
Everestianum	H-2	4/3	June 18
Lavender Queen	H-2	3/4	June 13
Lee's Dark Purple	H-2	3/3	June 18
Nova Zembla	H-1	3/3	June 15
Parsons Gloriosum	H-1	3/2	June 22
Pink Roseum	H-1	3/3	June 16
Pioneer	H-2	3/3	June 20
Praecox	H-3	3/3	May 13
Ramapo	H-1	4/4	May 28
Roseum Elegans	H-1	3/3	June 17
Shams Ruby	H-1	3/3	June 9

¹Hardiness rating method is that used by the American Rhododendron Society e.g. H-1 hardy to -25°F, H-2 hardy to -15°F, H-3 hardy to -5°F.

²Quality rating method is that used by the American Rhododendron Society. 1 = poor, 2 = below average, 3 = average, 4 = above average, 5 = superior. A variety rated 4/2 indicates above average bloom quality and below average plant type.

³Average date of full bloom is the 5-year average (1968-72).

The Research Station has 36 species of rhododendrons and azaleas on test as well as 70 varieties of rhododendrons and 62 varieties of azaleas. Many of these have flowered less than five years (due to time of procurement & planting) so were not included in the listing above. Those in this category that survived the very severe 1971-72 winter and flowered well are as follows:

Rhododendron varieties Albert Close, Besse Howells, Belle Heller, Candy, County of York, Dr. V. H. Rutgers, Holden, Ice Cube, Ignatius Sargent, Madame Carvalho, Mrs. C. S. Sargent, Pinnacle, Pink Roseum, P.J.M., Roslyn, Scintillation, Warwick.

Knap Hill Hybrid Azaleas Ballerina, Balzac, Bright Straw, Cecile, Debutante, Desert Pink, Devon, Fireball, Gallipoli Red, Ginger, Gold Crest, Goldeneye, Gold Flake, Honeysuckle, Kathleen, Knap Hill Red, Marion Merriman, Old Gold, Oxydol, Persil, Princess Royal, Strawberry Ice, Sun Chariot, Sylphides.

Ghent Hybrid Azaleas Coccinea Speciosa, Corneille, Daviesii, Homebush, Narcissiflora.

Mollis Hybrids Damage slight to moderate, Dr. M. Oesthoek, Koster's Brilliant Red, Mrs. Peter Koster, Queen Emma, Spek's Orange.

1972 Breeding Program Progress

2028 rhododendron and 626 azalea seedlings were produced from 35 crosses made in 1971. The background of the rhododendron material used in the crosses was *R.yakusimanum*, *R.degronianum*, Catalgla, Carmen, Elizabeth, Nova Zembla, Redhead and Sham's Ruby. The azalea crossing involved the intercrossing of varieties of Knap Hill Hybrids. The 2313 seedlings from 18 crosses made in 1970 were planted in field plots in June 1972. Of 882 seedlings planted in open (fully exposed for hardiness determination) field plots from crosses made in 1968, and 692 from crosses made in 1969, only 502 survived the severe winter of 1971-72. 689 of 1087 seedlings from crosses made in 1965 and 1966 remain in nursery beds for evaluation purposes. To date, 25 selections have been made from this group. It will be possible to make more selections as this group reaches maturity. The total number of rhododendron and azalea seedlings now on hand is 6158. Total number of seedlings produced since 1958 is 13816. 88 selections have been made to date.

RHODODENDRON CANADENSE

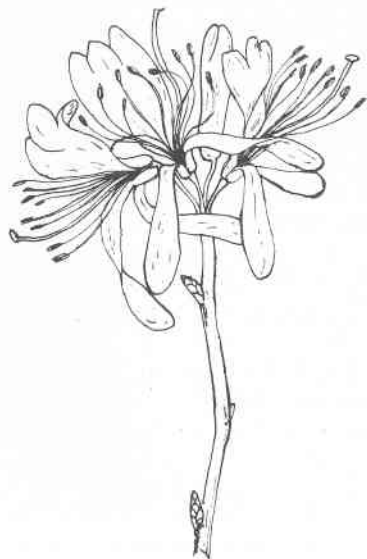
Captain R. M. Steele Halifax, Nova Scotia

This rhododendron, often referred to as RHODORA, is a member of the azalea series of the genus. It contributes the name to 'the subseries *Canadense*' in which it is grouped with *R.albrechtii*, *R.pentaphyllum*, and *R.vaseyi*.

It is a small deciduous shrub up to 1 metre in height, with quite thin rugose leaves which range in color from dull green, through bluish-green to quite a distinct and attractive bluish-gray. These leaves can reach 5cm (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches) in length, but are usually shorter.

The florets are 2 cm. ($\frac{3}{4}$ inch) in length and slightly less in width. They are found in clusters of from three to twelve. The colour ranges from a wishy-washy pale mauve to some very attractive deep rosy-purples. There is a white form which is found on rare occasions and which is known as *R.canadense alba*. The floret is rotate to companulate, two-lipped, with the lower lip divided almost to the base. It thrives on moist somewhat tundra-like situations, often under very acid conditions. It flowers before the leaves appear and sometimes provides acres of colour in Eastern Canada and in the intermediate Northland.

It has always failed in quite a number of attempts that I have made to hybridize it. However, many years ago the late George Fraser obtained a cross with *R.japonicum* which is named *R.fraseri*. I have a plant from this cross growing here in Nova Scotia which came from Alleyne Cook of the Stanley Park Gardens in Vancouver.



Flowering Shoot



Fruiting Shoot

CROSS BREEDING FOR THE BEGINNER

Rhododendrons are among the easiest plants to cross fertilize at will. The flowers are large and pollen from the stamens of one flower can be readily daubed on the pistil of another. It is an enjoyable hobby watching the development of seedlings, the result of one's own hopeful efforts.

Of course the serious breeder selects the parentage with considerable care and forethought, having in mind the objective of the exercise — a clearer pink, a hardier red or yellow, or plant with desirable form as well as richness of flower colour. Lacking the necessary genetic information however, need not prevent you from starting to learn the technique. Here's how.

1. Select any two species or varieties that bloom at the same time and decide which will be the "mother plant". Select a good flowerhead coming into bloom and remove all but three of the flower buds. The time to do this is when the buds are fully developed but before they open. Clip away the petals and stamens of each floret, taking care not to injure the ovary or pistil. Draw a small paper bag (do not use plastic) over the prepared florets, taking care that it does not touch or crush the delicate remaining flower parts.
2. The style and stigma will go on developing normally inside the bag in spite of the loss of the other flower parts. In a few days the stigma will become sticky and this is the time to receive the pollen. Now bring the stamens from the fully opened "father plant" and lightly touch the sticky pistils with the pollen bearing stamens. You will see strings of pollen grains adhere readily to the pistil heads of the mother plant. Now replace the paper bag. A twist-tye at a point below the flower head should be all that is necessary to hold the bag in a rigid position. Write a tag (preferably in copper or aluminum) with the mother plant name first, thus: Mother name x Father name. This tag should stay with the resultant seed pods, attached to the seed flat when seeds are sown, and kept with the progeny for identification throughout the early stages of seedling life. The paper bag may be removed after the blooming period.
3. Harvesting the seed is done after an early frost has turned the pods brown, but before they have split open. This may be only a matter of a week in the fall. Without a carefully daily watch the seed may be lost. Unless gathered too soon the seed pods normally split open and discharge the seeds freely when kept in a dry place indoors. A small glass tumbler is a suitable container. The many hundred seeds may now be wrapped in wax paper with the original metal label accompanying the package and kept in the refrigerator. Directions for sowing the seed were given in a paper by Ray Halward, Bulletin No. 3, 1972.

Seed of species, hand pollinated as above, would be most welcomed by the Seed Exchange.

IT'S SPRING AGAIN!

M. Van Alstyne Mississauga, Ontario

The sun is warm, the birds are singing. The countdown has begun for that moment when the earliest rhodos and azaleas show colour in the bud, then gloriously unfold, assuring us that they can and will grow and flourish in "the True North Strong and Free"!

In Volume 1, Number 1 of our Bulletin a list of gardens was published where plantings of rhodos could be seen at blossoming time.

To recap briefly these were:

Halifax Public Park, Nova Scotia

Kentville Research Station, Nova Scotia (Canada Department of Agriculture)

Plant Research Institute, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa. (Canada Department of Agriculture)

Edwards Gardens, Toronto, Ontario

Woodland Nurseries, Mississauga, Ontario

Horticultural Research Station, Vineland Ontario (Ontario Department of Agriculture)

Stanley Park, Vancouver, B.C.

Queen Elizabeth Park, Vancouver, B.C.

Park and Telford Gardens, North Vancouver, B.C.

Burnaby Centennial Park, Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C.

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C.

U.B.C. Botanical Garden, Vancouver, B.C. (by appointment only)

To this list we are pleased to add:

"The Glades" White Rock, B.C.

The home of Mrs. Lydia M. G. Stephen, developed by her husband, the late Murray Stephen. Five acres of rhododendrons and azaleas in a woodland setting, with a lake and marked trails. Small entry fee.

Though our membership is spread across many thousands of miles there are already concentration points developing: Halifax, Montreal, Toronto-Hamilton area, Niagara peninsula, Vancouver. I would like to make a suggestion to the members who wish to broaden their knowledge of the various species and varieties. Call another member who lives near you. Visit each other's gardens. Meet each other. I have found there is nothing quite so satisfying as to discover a new friend who has the same interests — the same problems. When the pleasure is shared it is magnified — when the problems are shared they can be solved more quickly. Getting to know one another is the best way to learn more about growing rhododendrons and the surest way to strengthen our Society.

REGIONAL NOTES

Montreal Prof. J. Ronsley

Montreal's first meeting of the Rhododendron Society was held last January at my home. As expected the attendance was small, with additional absences due to illness and snow, but the meeting was successful nevertheless. Mr. Hancock gave a beautiful slide-lecture on plants suitable for the Montreal area and on his own hybrids, and Rudi Behring showed slides from the Society's newly formed slide collection which he has assembled. Since some of the people attending had not grown azaleas or rhododendrons before, converts were made (not the smallest factor in which was the personal charm of Mr. Hancock). It was generally agreed, however, that better attendance could be achieved if future meetings were held when the weather was less hazardous, say in March.

Undoubtedly, the most important event since our first meeting was Rudi Behring's visit to the Montreal Botanical Garden, where he was able to contact the Assistant Superintendent, who in turn arranged a meeting with Mr. P. Bruque, section head of the newly established arboretum. Present also were the head gardener and head propagator. Discussion centered on mistakes currently being made in the cultivation of the few rhododendrons already planted there, and on the possibility of expanding the plantings of azaleas and rhododendrons, using better methods. Mr. Behring, it appears, supplied a good deal of information in this regard, and the discussion was fruitful mutually for the Montreal Botanical Garden and the Rhododendron Society of Canada.

A new Ericaceae section had already been planned, but, on Mr. Behring's suggestion, this would now be made more elaborate than anticipated, with the moving of already existing rhododendrons and the purchase of a substantial number of new azaleas and rhododendrons from Woodland Nurseries, Mississauga, Ontario. Mr. Hancock confirms that he has received an order from the Botanical Garden, so the plans have already been made operative. Furthermore, it was agreed that an area be set aside as a testing ground, and that space be made available for newly developed hybrids of Mr. Behring's and those of other members of the Society who might be interested.

Consultation between Mr. Behring and the Garden staff also included the subject of seedlings and cuttings in the greenhouse, which heretofore had not been overly successful. Further discussion of rhododendrons is anticipated among members of the biology staff of the University of Laval, and at the Horticultural Institute of Quebec. Finally, agreement was reached, through Mr. Behring's efforts and the genuine interest of the men at the Botanical Garden, on a general exchange of information and of seedlings. The upshot of these discussions may very well be the first serious professional consideration of rhododendrons and azaleas as garden plants suitable for the Montreal area.

Toronto Jessie Breland Waxer

SPRING FLOWER SHOW — TORONTO 73 A pleasant experience was shared by our volunteers at the Society's exhibit at the Toronto Garden Club Spring Flower Show at the O'Keefe Centre, March 7-11. Space was donated by the Garden Club for the second consecutive year to help publicize the Society and enlarge our membership.

Our woodland garden, much admired and photographed, drew a steady stream of visitors to our display in the northwest corner of O'Keefe's street level.

Rhododendrons and azaleas, coaxed into bloom by Leslie Hancock and members of his nursery staff, illuminated our display with a magnificent show of colour. Many viewers were tempted to step onto the stone footpath meandering through the garden, to view more intimately the gorgeous mauves, pinks, reds, whites and corals. Azaleas Fedora and Directeur Moerlands, rhododendrons America, Dora Amateis and Pink Pom Pom were most commented on and admired.

Our volunteers were gathered from Toronto, suburbs and surrounding villages. All responded with much enthusiasm to the request of manning our exhibit. We owe a round of applause to S. G. Choles, D. F. Compton, Mrs. J. Cohoe, A. P. Craig, Mrs. J. Lovat Dickson, K. Duncan, Mrs. R. I. Fitzhenry, Mr. and Mrs. P. W. Nilson and Mrs. P. Waxer.

We are looking forward to more membership involvement at the Society Annual Meeting and Flower Show at Fairview Mall, June 1-2. Let us all participate as entrants, staffers and viewers and make this an outstanding event.

Hamilton W. J. Brender à Brandis

RHODODENDRON MEETING MARCH 14, 1973 This meeting was sponsored by the Royal Botanical Gardens and the Rhododendron Society of Canada jointly in order to inform any people interested in rhododendrons. Good publicity had been given by the Newsletters of both institutions, as well as the press and the radio. Approximately 80 persons were present, many had travelled considerable distance. The many questions indicated their interest. A number of them applied for membership.

Ray Halward opened the meeting and Bill Brandis gave a short review of the work and purpose of our Society. The main speakers for the evening were Les Hancock (on rhododendrons), Ken Duncan (on azaleas) and Larry Sherk (on availability and purchasing of plants). All three speakers showed excellent selections of slides.

Many flowering plants from Les Hancock and the Horticultural Research Institute at Vineland decorated the hall and served as examples during the discussions. The plants from Les Hancock were sold at the end of the meeting, the proceeds of which were donated to the Society.

Winnipeg Letter from Dr. Bruce Chown

"Dr. Wm. A. Cumming, Head, Ornamentals and Fruit Crop Section, Canada Department of Agriculture Research Branch, Morden, Man. R0G 1J0, had two rhododendrons growing in the summer of 1972: "one" he wrote, "is doing quite well, the other is struggling along". He sent me a slide of the first: it was covered with fine pink flowers. These two plants were the survivors from 6 first generation seedlings of *R.roseum* x *R.molle* that had been sent to Dr. Cumming by Dr. Leon C. Snyder of the University of Minnesota in 1969. The University of Minnesota has had very considerable success with azaleas.

I am trying to grow rhododendrons at my summer home at Lac du Bonnet, 90 miles N.E. of here on the Winnipeg River. The soil conditions there are somewhat like those at Kenora where, according to your Regional Notes (p.25, Vol 1, No. 3) Dr. C. V. Greenway hopes to grow rhododendrons. I received seed in January 1970 from Mervin C. Eisel, Extension Horticulturist at the Landscape Arboretum of the University of Minnesota. The seed was "from a hardy strain of the Mollis (*R. x mollis*)". The Plant Science Department of the University of Manitoba started these for me and in the spring of 1970 I planted 15 out at Lac du Bonnet. As of last fall 4 plants were still growing, although the rate of growth was exceedingly slow. Last Friday (March 29) I had a quick look at them: the buds are beginning to swell, so they have survived three winters without protection other than whatever snow may cover them.

I spent a good deal of time last summer building a new bed for these plants (and some other acid lovers) and hope that in this their growth will be more vigorous."

Our Regional Notes show signs of becoming a most vital part of the Bulletin. Members from all areas of Canada (and elsewhere) are asked to contribute whenever possible. Notes on winter effects (especially from the colder parts), bloom quality, cultural techniques, social events — all can help to keep members in touch.

Members with specific problems, questions on culture or breeding are invited to write to our Research Consultant: Mr. Ken Begg, c/o Horticultural Research Station, Vineland, Ontario. A column dealing with these matters can be included in the Bulletin and can serve as a guide for further informative articles.

Errata Volume 1 — Number 3, 1972
 Outside Back Cover — Captions for pictures reversed
 Above: Golden Sunset Below: Ghent azalea Corneille

BOOK REVIEW**Rhododendrons and Azaleas
Sunset book edition**

This book falls in a different class than those written by D. G. Leach and G. Krussman, which were reviewed in earlier bulletins. It is more compact and written in popular practical style.

The 80-page volume has numerous black and white photographs, drawings and many tables. The text describes the various aspects of rhododendron culture in a down-to-earth way. The subjects include soil and climatic conditions, planting, diseases, insects, pruning, propagation, as well as growing plants in containers for patios or as bonsai.

Like many other rhododendron publications, this one covers all North America, and the reader has to distinguish between the various geographic regions which are clearly indicated. Hardiness ratings are given in degrees Fahrenheit, and even for insects and diseases the areas of common occurrence are mentioned.

The retail price is \$2.50 and you should be able to obtain this book at any bookstore, or at the Canadian agents for the publishers, Saunders of Toronto, Ltd., 1885 Leslie Street, Don Mills, Ontario. This time our Society is not offering to supply copies at a reduced price to our members. We have had too many difficulties with delivery on previous occasions (we are still waiting for delivery of the book by Krussman which we ordered in November).

Members who want a short practical guide without reading through thick volumes will find this Sunset book very useful.

Congratulations and Best Wishes to the Newly Formed

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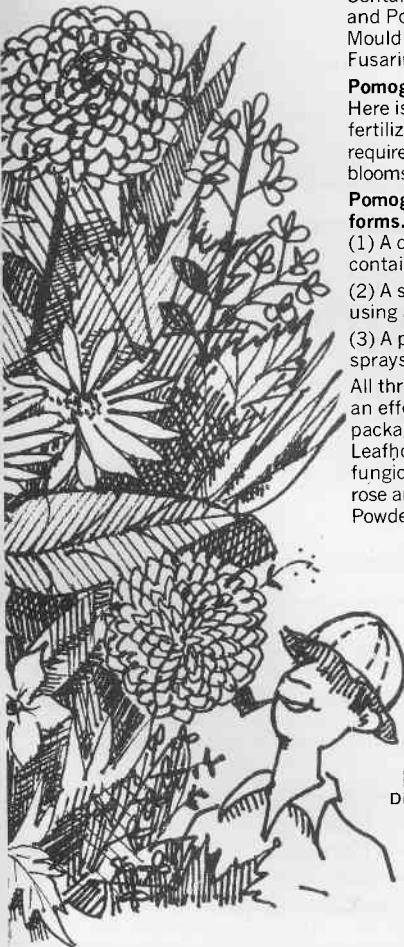
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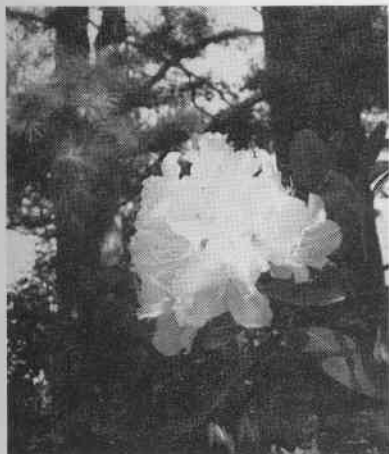
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Front Cover Gibraltar, a superior Exbury hybrid azalea, with large orange-red flowers. *Photo: Kentville*

Above Homebush azalea has bright pink, tightly formed ball-like trusses. *Photo: Kentville*

Below Fawley, a Knap Hill azalea. Flowers are white flushed with pink. *Photo: Kentville*

