

A Guide to the
Native Rhododendrons
at Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens



Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens

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ON THE COVER | This is a Florida flame azalea (*R. austrinum*) that we call “Florida Peach” for its orange-peach flowers. This particular plant was grown from seed collected at Gantt Lake in Covington County, AL from a population of plants with “pure golden yellow flowers”. This is a great example of genetic variation as it is not golden yellow at all! Photo by Chris Swisher.

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About this Guide

Produced in 2020, this guide was created to promote our ongoing efforts to collect, preserve, and celebrate the incredible beauty of our native rhododendrons and azaleas.

Throughout this guide, we hope to teach you about these wonderful plants—what they typically look like, where they grow wild, when they bloom, if they are fragrant or not, and so on.

You will learn about the genetic variation that exists within these species. That variation allows some individuals to exhibit unusual characteristics that differ from the norm. Though there can be variations in bloom time, foliage quality, and growth habit, the most noteworthy variations exist in the flowers. Though our collection continues to grow, the following pages will show some of those striking variations.

With Thanks

We would like to thank many people for their assistance with the production of this guide, the procurement of many of the plants displayed within it, or assistance with building this collection. Our preservation efforts are significantly strengthened because of their continued generous support.

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What are Rhododendrons?

The name Rhododendron comes from the Greek words “rodon” which means “rose” and “dendron” which means “tree”. These “rose trees”, a reference to their large, showy flowers, belong to the heath family (Ericaceae), along with many others including blueberries and mountain laurels. The plants that we refer to as “rhododendrons” as well as those we refer to as “azaleas” are both in the genus *Rhododendron*.

Rhododendron vs. Azalea – What’s the Difference?

Though they are closely related, there are several differences between rhododendrons and azaleas. Generally speaking, “rhododendrons” have larger, thicker and more leathery evergreen foliage. They tend to have fewer, stouter stems and usually have large clusters of bell-shaped flowers, each flower having 10 or more short stamens.

Azaleas, on the other hand, tend to have thinner, hairy leaves and longer, more slender stems. They are generally more floriferous with three or more flowers at the end of each branch. The flowers tend to be funnel shaped with five or six relatively long stamens.



Typical Rhododendron Flower



Typical Azalea Flower

Bloom times, bloom colors, habitat, and fragrance.

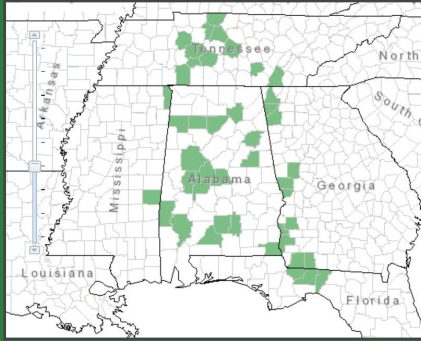
Species	Common	Bloom Time (SE PA)	Bloom Color	Fragrance
<i>vaseyi</i>	Pinkshell Azalea	Late April/Early May	Various shades of pinks. Whites and dark pinks rare.	No
<i>austrinum</i>	Florida Flame Azalea	Late April/Early May	Oranges and yellows. White and pink forms exist. Lots of variation.	Yes, good
<i>canescens</i>	Piedmont Azalea	Early May	Pinks. Whites possible but less common.	Yes. good. Musky, sweet "honeysuckle"
<i>flammeum</i>	Oconee Azalea	Early May	Oranges and reds. pinks, salmon, yellow all possible. Lots of hybridization.	No
<i>periclymenoides</i>	Pinxterbloom Azalea	Early May	White to dark pink/purple. light pink typical.	Slightly sweet or none
<i>alabamense</i>	Alabama Azalea	Early to mid May	White with yellow blotch. Rarely yellow. Sometimes flushed w/pink.	Yes, slightly lemony
<i>atlanticum</i>	Coastal Azalea	Early to mid May	White often flushed with a little pink. Some w/yellow blotch.	Yes. Strong. Sweet, rose like
<i>prinophyllum</i>	Roseshell Azalea	Early to mid May	Shades of pink, distinctive. No blotch.	Yes. Strong. Spicy/clove-like
<i>calendulaceum</i>	Flame Azalea	Mid May to Early June	Yellow, gold, orange. Bright red forms occasional.	No
<i>eastmanii</i>	May White Azalea	Late May/Early June	White with yellow blotch. Sometimes flushed with pink.	Yes. Very Good. Strong, sweet
<i>colemanii</i>	Red Hills Azalea	Late May/Early June	White, pink, or yellow. Can be with or without a blotch. Quite variable.	Yes. Very Good. Sweet, musky, lemony
<i>viscosum</i>	Swamp Azalea	June	White, sometimes with pinkish tint.	Yes. Very Good. Strong, spicy
<i>arborescens</i>	Sweet Azalea	June	White, sometimes w/yellow or pink flushing. Red/pink style and stamens.	Yes. Very strong. Like heliotrope
<i>cumberlandense</i>	Cumberland Azalea	Mid to late June	Orange to exceptional red. Very rarely yellow.	No
<i>maximum</i>	Rosebay Rhododendron	Late June through July	White, often flushed with pink. Typically with greenish-yellow blotch.	No
<i>prunifolium</i>	Plumleaf Azalea	July	Typically red-orange. Deep red somewhat common. Pinks and yellows possible.	No
<i>arborescens</i>	Late form Sweet Azalea	July	White, sometimes w/yellow or pink flushing. Red/pink style and stamens.	Yes. Outstanding. Strong heliotrope
<i>serrulatum</i>	Hammock-sweet Azalea	Late July	White to creamy white. Occasinoally pale pink.	Yes. Very good. Strong, spicy.

Alabama Azalea

Rhododendron alabamense



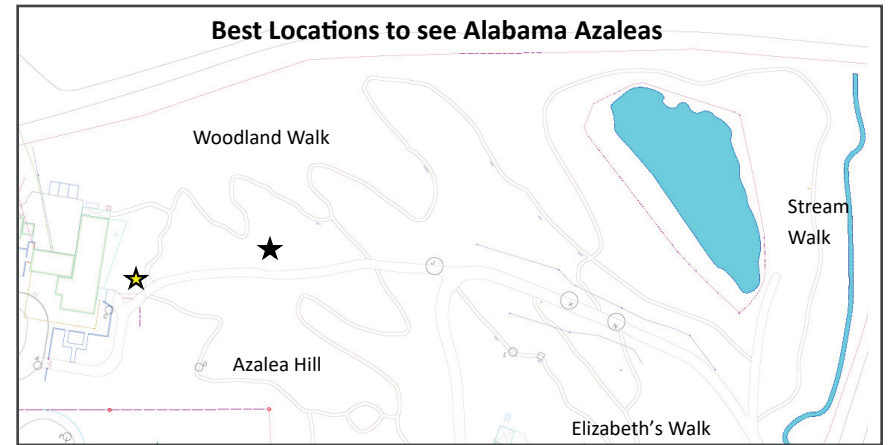
Typical Alabama Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Alabama Azalea

The Alabama Azalea is a low-growing (to about 6') compact species that suckers to form colonies. It blooms in early spring, just as the new leaves are emerging. Their snowy white flowers typically have a prominent yellow blotch. They have a wonderful fragrance reminiscent of lemons and spices. In the wild, this species can be found in north central Alabama and west to central Georgia and South Carolina. Though it is rarely seen in cultivation, it does make a wonderful garden plant. In addition to numerous unnamed *R. alabamense*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named selections:

- 'Alabama Snowballs' is a ball truss selection made by Vivian Abney.
- 'Big Chill' is a Clarence Towe selection.
- 'Catherine' is noted for its larger than normal flowers.
- 'Coleman's Sunshine Yellow' has fragrant, bright yellow flowers. It may be a hybrid with *R. austrinum*.
- 'Double White' A double-flowered form. There is a possibility it has other genes in it.
- 'Frosty' is a foliage selection made by Terry Greer in southwest, Georgia (his name is sometimes used for the cultivar name). It has small, somewhat glaucous leaves that have a white, powder like appearance on the undersides.
- 'Mary Brooke' is a very nice, pale yellow selection.
- 'Pete McNees' is a selection that exhibits some double flowers.
- Pink flowering form.



'Alabama Snowballs'



'Catherine'



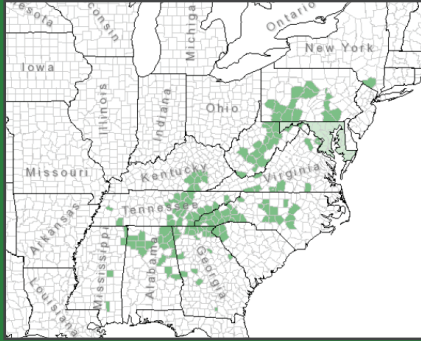
'Pete McNees'

Sweet Azalea

Rhododendron arborescens



Typical Sweet Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Sweet Azalea

The Sweet Azalea is a relatively fast growing, upright shrub that typically matures to 5-10' tall and wide, though it can grow taller. It blooms in late spring to mid-summer, after the leaves have emerged. With a strong, sweet fragrance reminiscent of heliotrope, their white to pale pink flowers will perfume a wide area. The species is easily identified by the dark pink to red stamens that protrude well beyond the mouth of the flower tubes. In the wild, this species grows in the southern Appalachians though it has proven to be very hardy much further north. It makes an outstanding garden plant. In addition to numerous unnamed *R. arborescens*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named selections:

- 'Dwarf Arborescens' is a dwarf/compact selection made by Clarence Towe.
- 'Gable's Yellow' is a selection with off-white flowers with a large yellow blotch that nearly covers the entire top petal.
- 'Georgia Belle' is a selection made by Clarence Towe for its large, leathery, dark green leaves, late flowering, and general vigor.
- Var. *georgiana* (aka "late *arborescens*") is a very late blooming, southern form that blooms in July/August, at the same time as *R. prunifolium*.
- Var. *richardsonii* is a naturally occurring variety that grows at high elevations. At those elevations, it is smaller/more compact.
- 'White Lightning' is dense and compact selection with exceptional fragrance discovered near Franklin, North Carolina by Clarence Towe. It might have a touch of *R. calendulaceum* in it.



'Gable's Yellow'



R. arborescens Var. *georgiana*



'White Lightning'



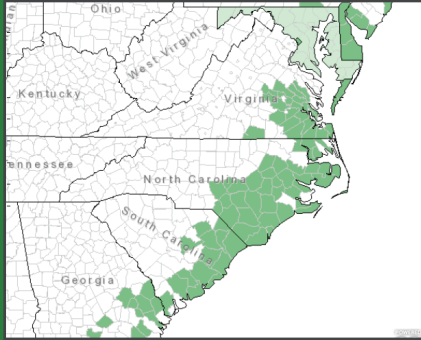
Early Blooming Form

Coastal Azalea

Rhododendron atlanticum



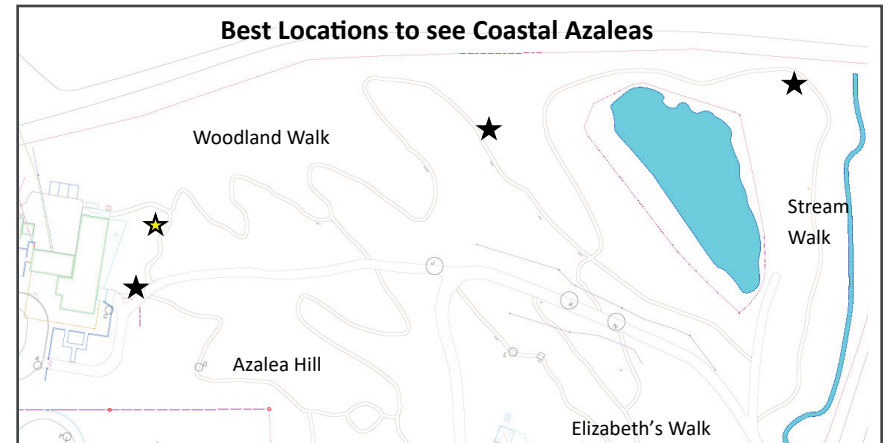
Typical Coastal Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Coastal Azalea

The Coastal Azalea is a very low-growing species (rarely more than 4') that spreads via underground stems to form large colonies. It blooms with or slightly before the emergence of new leaves in spring. The white flowers are sometimes flushed with pink and have a strong, sweet fragrance. The oval, blue green leaves are distinct. In the wild, the species grows in dense colonies in the sandy soils of the Atlantic coastal plain from New Jersey to southern Georgia. It makes a fine addition to the home landscape. In addition to numerous unnamed *R. atlanticum*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named selections:

- 'Baby Blues' is a Jenkins selection with very small, blueish leaves. Flowers are normal size.
- 'Earl's Atlanticum' is a selection made by Earl Sommerville for its good, blueish foliage and slight pink flowers.
- 'Fragrant Star' is arguably the most fragrant of all the native azaleas and has larger flowers than 'Snowbird'.
- 'Marydel' is an exceptional plant with light pink flowers and excellent blue foliage. It was found growing wild by Polly Hill along the Choptank River at the Maryland/Delaware border.
- 'Snowbird' is a fragrant selection from the gardens at the Biltmore Estate. The flowers are white with a hint of pink in the tubes and pistils.
- 'Tappahana Mist' is a compact selection found by Jim Plyler growing wild near the Tappahanna River in Delaware.
- 'Winnie-B' is a very nice, pink-flowered selection found by Ray Head.



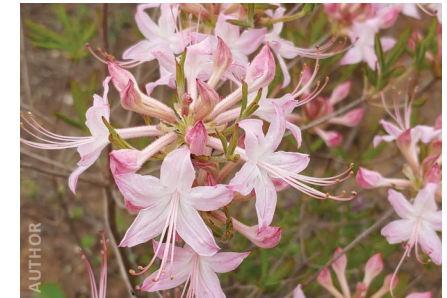
'Winnie B'



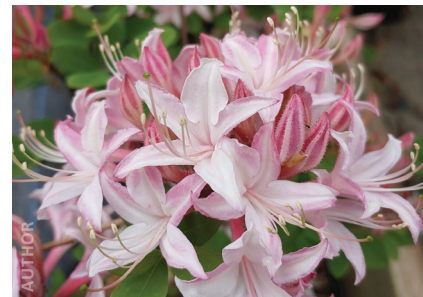
'Baby Blues'



'Tappahana Mist'



Unnamed *R. atlanticum*



'Earl's Atlanticum'



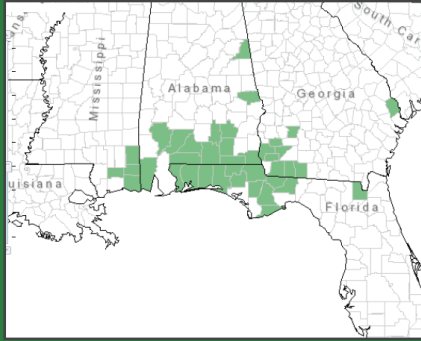
'Snowbird'

Florida Flame Azalea

Rhododendron austrinum



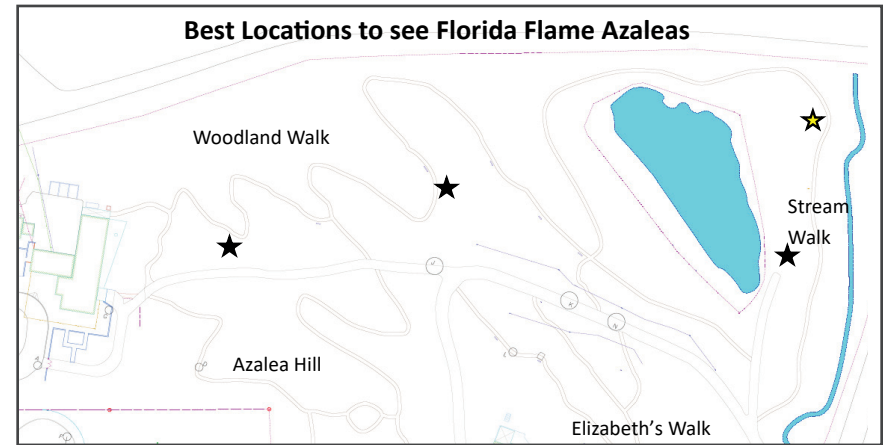
Typical Florida Flame Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Florida Flame Azalea

The Florida Flame Azalea is an upright species that grows up to 10' tall. There is a huge amount of variation in flower color within this species ranging from white to yellow to red orange. The fragrant flowers emerge just before or with the leaves in spring. In the wild, this species can be found in the panhandle of Florida and southern Georgia, west to southern Alabama and Mississippi. This vigorous species is adaptable to a variety of site conditions and makes a great addition to any garden. In addition to numerous unnamed *R. austrinum*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named selections:

- 'Harrison's Red' is a unique, coral colored selection discovered by Falling Waters Nursery in Chipley, Florida.
- 'Millie Mac' is noted for its unusual, gold picotee flowers with a thin white margin. It was discovered by Floyd McConnell as a limb sport on a wild growing plant in Escambia County, Alabama.
- 'Moonbeam' is an early blooming, yellow flowering selection made by noted azalea explorer Kelly Strickland. It is considered by many to be among the best *R. austrinum* selections.
- 'Pink Tetraploid' is a pink flowered selection discovered by noted azalea explorer, Ron Miller on the Yellow River in Florida. This population of pink azaleas might one day be considered a new species.
- 'Ruffled Gold' is a Vivian Abney selection with bright ruffled gold flowers.
- 'Tomato Soup' is a dark orange, nearly red selection made by Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens.



'Dryocampa'



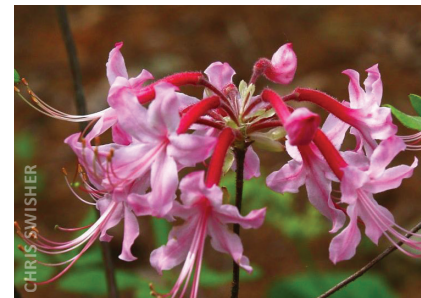
'Florida Peach'



'Lemon Ice'



'Moonbeam'



'Pink Tetraploid'



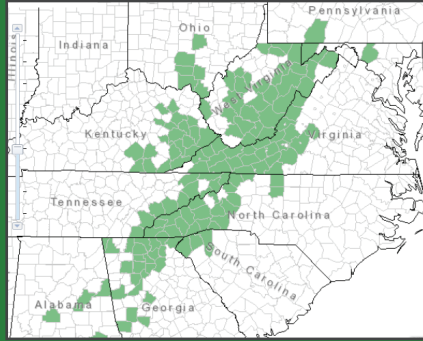
'Tomato Soup'

Flame Azalea

Rhododendron calendulaceum



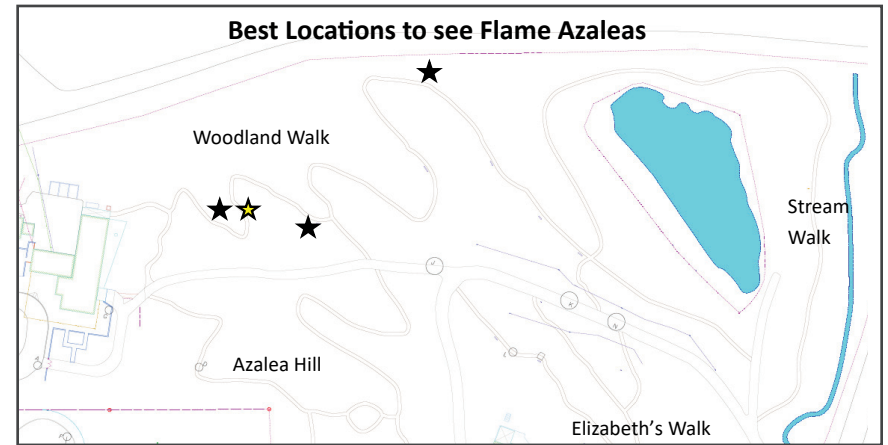
Typical Flame Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Flame Azalea

The Flame Azalea is an upright, loosely branched species that matures to about 10' tall and wide. It has showy terminal clusters of 5-15 large flowers that unfold with or before the expanding leaves. This species has the largest and showiest flowers of all the native azaleas and vary in color from yellow to orange, sometimes tinged with pink. Some can even be pinkish to deep red. The great variation in color is likely due to the species' ability to hybridize naturally with other species. The Flame Azalea grows wild on woodland slopes and mountain balds in the Appalachian Mountains from Pennsylvania south to Georgia. This species is extensively planted as an ornamental shrub, and for good reason. In addition to numerous unnamed *R. calendulaceum*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named selection:

- 'Currahee' is a selection with striped, red-and-yellow buds that open to orange blooms with rosy-pink margins.
- 'Mandarin Red' is a selection with intense orange-red flowers.
- 'Marmalade' is a Jenkins selection with orange flowers and dark orange accents.
- 'Big Bird' is a Don Hyatt/George McLellan selection found on Roan Mountain near Jane Bald. It is a clear yellow with the top petal frilled and overlaid with gold.
- 'Serenity Yellow' is a yellow flowered selection made by Jim Gears.



'Currahee'



'Marmalade'



Unnamed multicolored *R. calendulaceum*



Unnamed yellow *R. calendulaceum*



'Serenity Yellow'



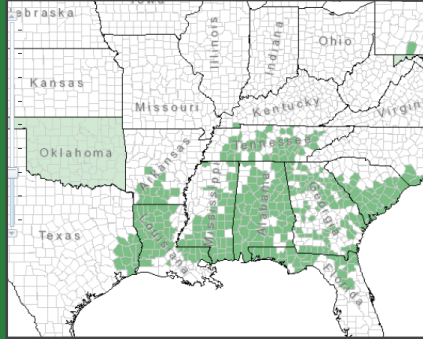
'Orange Carpet'

Piedmont Azalea

Rhododendron canescens



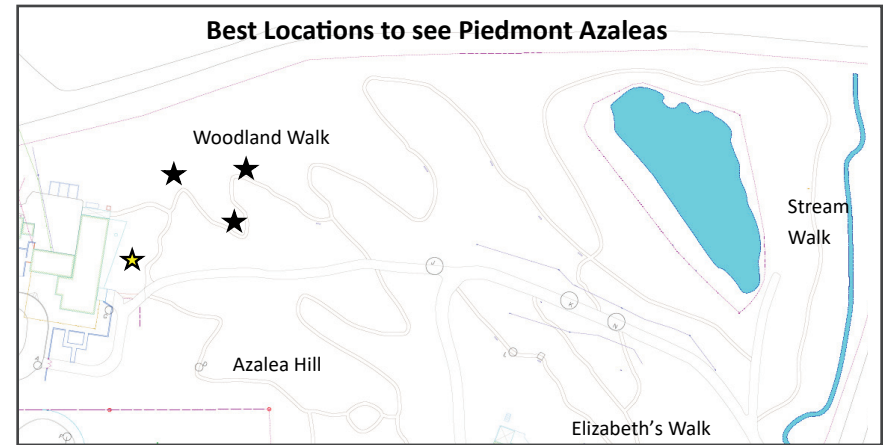
Typical Piedmont Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Piedmont Azalea

The Piedmont Azalea is a large, showy, multi-stemmed shrub typically growing to 6-8'. The pink (rarely white), lightly fragrant flowers appear before the leaves have expanded in the spring. This is the most common of the native azaleas and, in the wild, tends to form large colonies in moist woods from North Carolina and Tennessee to central Florida, and west to eastern Texas. This species would be a welcome addition to any garden and is cold hardy to USDA Hardiness Zone 5. In addition to numerous unnamed *R. canescens*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named selections:

- 'Baby Doll' is a Jenkins selection named for its light pink, frilled petals. Typically grows with ball trusses.
- 'Candy Striper' is an outstanding selection made by Vivian Abney from the fields of Jim Plyler. It has dark pink flowers with a light pink strip down the middle of each petal.
- 'Chocolate Drop' is an unusual, foliage selection of *R. canescens* whose leaves emerge bright chocolate red and the flowers are white. The leaves fade to green as the season goes on.
- 'Peppermint Pink' is a Jenkins selection named for its exceptional pink flowers with light stripe.
- 'Summer Lynn' is a bright pink selection of *R. canescens* made by Superior Trees.
- 'Varnadoe's Phlox Pink' is a popular selection with abundant pink flowers, and good growth habit and foliage.
- 'Watermelon' is a gorgeous watermelon pink selection of *R. canescens* sold by Superior Trees in Florida.



'Baby Doll'



'Camilla's Blush'



'Clyo Red'



'Cotton Candy'



'Peppermint Pink'



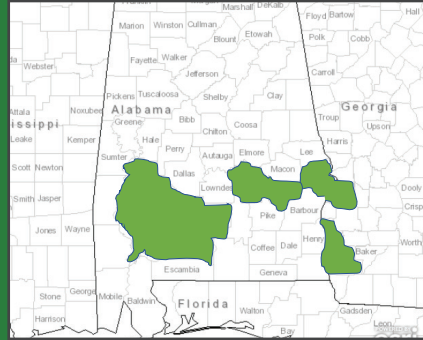
'Watermelon'

Red Hills Azalea

Rhododendron colemanii



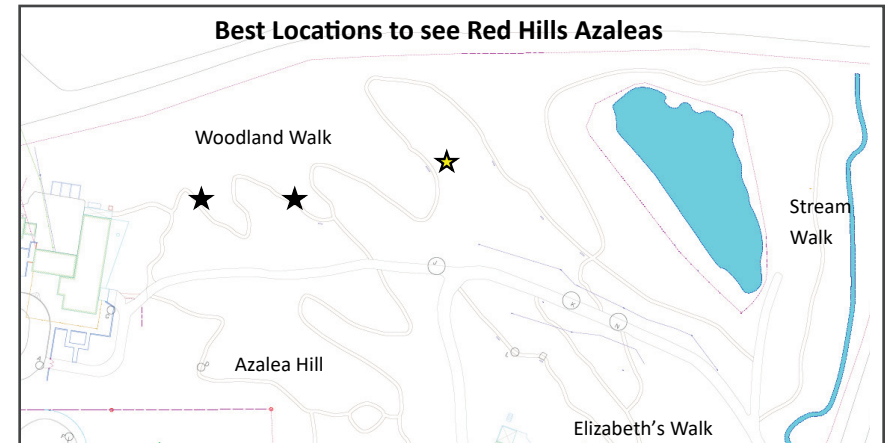
Typical Red Hills Azalea Flower



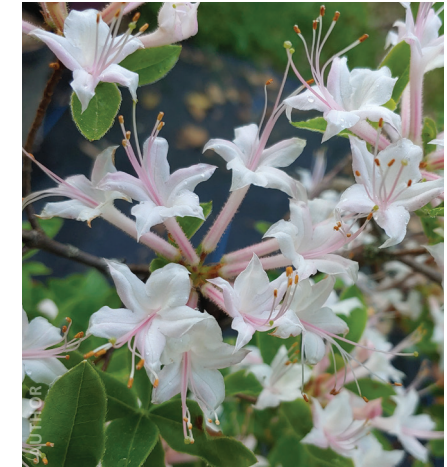
Natural Range of Red Hills Azalea

The Red Hills azalea is the most recently recognized native azalea species (formally recognized in 2008). The story of its discovery and recognition is a long, but interesting one, and deserves more space than can be afforded here. In short, the Red Hills Azalea is a large, multi-stemmed, colonizing shrub that can grow to 15'. Its flowers are very fragrant and highly variable in color including pink, white, and yellow, typically with a yellow blotch. In the wild, this species grows in the Red Hills region of South Alabama and eastward into Georgia along the Chattahoochee River. It tends to grow best in cool, bottomland forests near creeks and streams. Being fairly new to the scene, its merit as a garden plant has yet to be determined. Though there are about a dozen *R. colemanii* in the Jenkins collection, there are only two named selections.

- 'Flat Creek Tetraploid' is a white selection made by Ron Miller in Monroe County Alabama. It blooms slightly later than the others and, at around 3" wide, it is the largest-flowering *R. colemanii* he has seen.
- 'Big White' is a large-flowered selection with a distinctive yellow blotch.



Pink Flowered *R. colemanii*



Unnamed *R. colemanii*



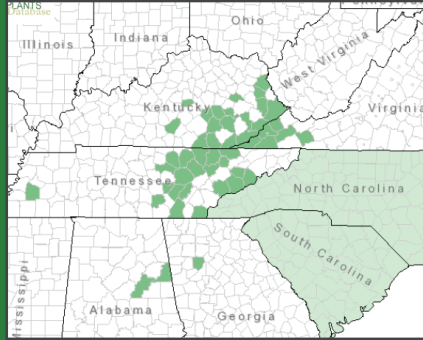
'Big White'

Cumberland Azalea

Rhododendron cumberlandense



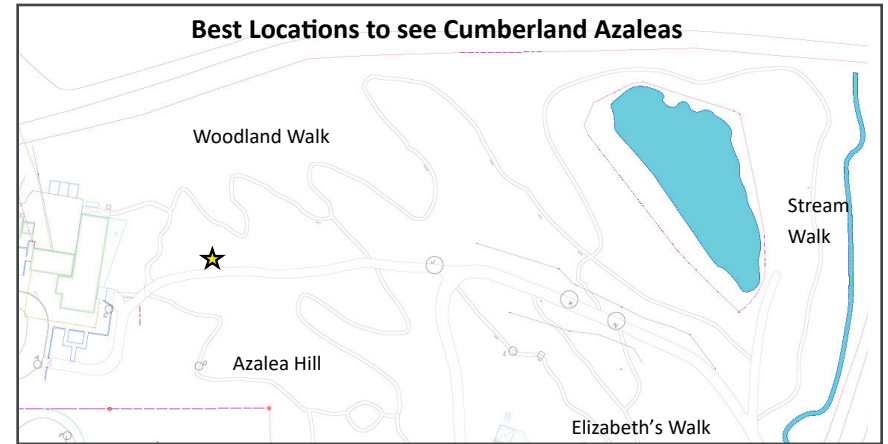
Typical Cumberland Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Cumberland Azalea

Formerly *R. bakeri*, The Cumberland Azalea is a bushy shrub that grows to about 6' tall. The non-fragrant flowers, which open in late spring after the leaves have fully expanded, are usually orange to red, though there is a lot of variation. The undersides of the leaves are usually waxy white or bluish in color. The species is sometimes mistaken for *R. calendulaceum* but the flowers tend to be smaller and appear later in the season. In the wild, *R. cumberlandense* inhabits mixed hardwood forests in the high altitudes of the Cumberland Plateau in Kentucky south to Tennessee and the mountainous regions of Georgia, Alabama, and North Carolina. Though the Cumberland Azalea is a lovely plant with great landscape value, there are very few selections of the species. The least common of the native azaleas at Jenkins, there are fewer than 10 *R. cumberlandense* in the collection. Three of those, however, are over 40 years old. There are no named selections currently in the garden at Jenkins, but the selection called 'Sunlight' has been propagated and is in process.

- 'Sunlight' is a Polly Hill selection with an exhilarating mixture of orange, rose, and old gold.



Unnamed *R. cumberlandense*



Unnamed *R. cumberlandense*



Unnamed *R. cumberlandense*

May White Azalea *Rhododendron eastmanii*

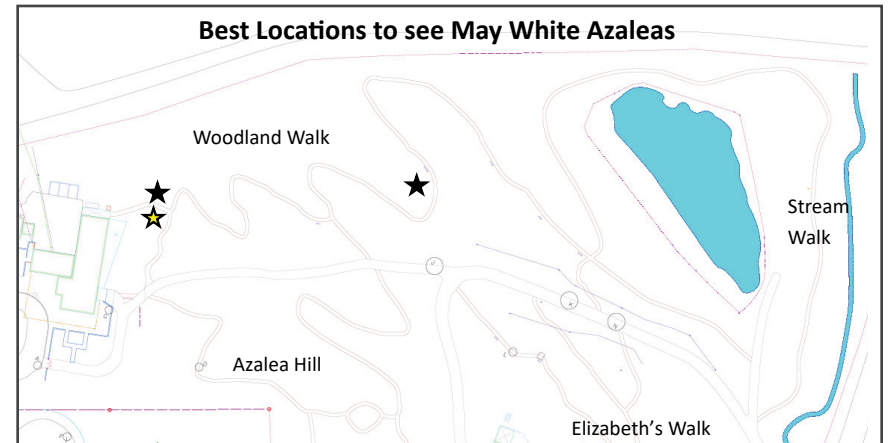


Typical May White Azalea Flower



Natural Range of May White Azalea

Like *R. colemanii*, the May White Azalea has a long and interesting story. Until the formal recognition of *R. colemanii* in 2008, *R. eastmanii* was the most recent addition to the list of native azalea species. It was proposed as a new species in 1999 by Kathleen Kron, a botanist at Wake Forest University, and Mike Creel a retired South Carolina Department of Natural Resources employee and native azalea expert. It was named for Charles Eastman who is credited for the initial discovery of the species. It is a small to medium sized, clumping shrub that grows 3-6' tall and wide. The fragrant flowers are white with a yellow blotch and open in late May (hence the common name) after the leaves have fully emerged. In the wild, the species inhabits steep, north-facing woodland slopes above streams and has a very small distribution, being found on fewer than 30 sites in only 11 South Carolina counties. There are no named selections in the Jenkins collection, but there are about a dozen small plants of straight species *R. eastmanii*.



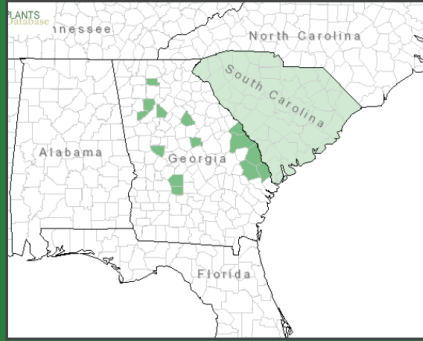
Unnamed *R. eastmanii*

Oconee Azalea

Rhododendron flammeum



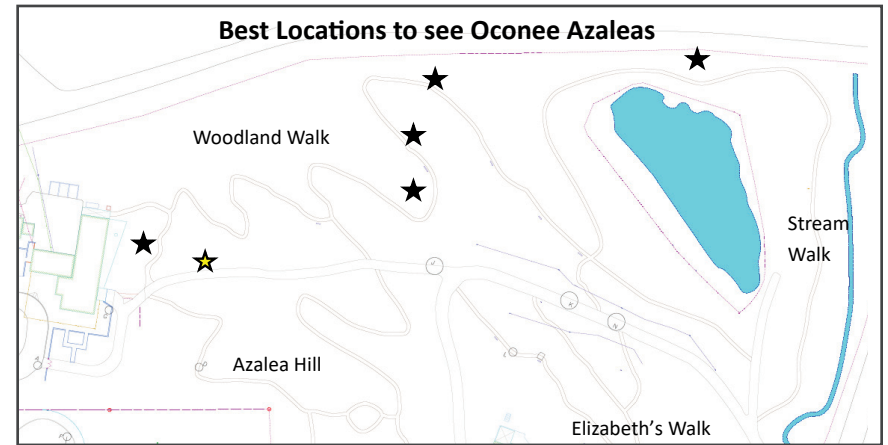
Typical Oconee Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Oconee Azalea

The Oconee Azalea is a medium-sized, clumping shrub that grows to about 8'. The flowers are not fragrant and open just as the leaves are beginning to expand in spring. They are typically orange in color, but can range from yellow to red, and usually have a blotch. In the wild, this species is primarily distributed along the Flint and Savannah River drainage areas on the border of Georgia and South Carolina. There are many wonderful selections of this species and it makes a great landscape plant. In addition to a handful of unnamed *R. flammeum*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named selections:

- 'Double Pleasure' is a selection noted for its gorgeous, orange-red flowers that are sometimes double.
- 'Elberta' is a selection noted for its nice peach-colored flowers.
- 'Jack Melton' is a vivid red cultivar discovered in central Georgia by Earl Sommerville. Its bright red flowers bloom in ball like clusters.
- 'Jake's Red' is a dwarf selection (3-4') made by Earl Sommerville. The flowers are light red and form ball trusses.
- 'Magenta Rose Flame' has magenta flowers with a yellow accent.
- 'Mallory' was selected for its nice reddish bloom color with yellow blotch. The blooms make a small, but showy ball truss.
- 'Raspberry Sorbet' is a Jenkins selection with vibrant raspberry-colored flowers with faint orange blotch.
- 'Red Inferno' is a selection with bright orange flowers with a yellow blotch that matures to a solid, bright red.
- 'Salmon Sunset' is an outstanding Jenkins selection with salmon-orange flowers held in dense ball trusses.



'Double Pleasure'



'Raspberry Sorbet'



'Red Inferno'



'Salmon Sunset'



'NE Smith Red'



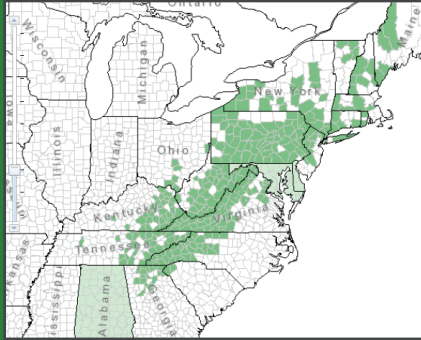
'Vivian Abney'

Rosebay Rhododendron

Rhododendron maximum



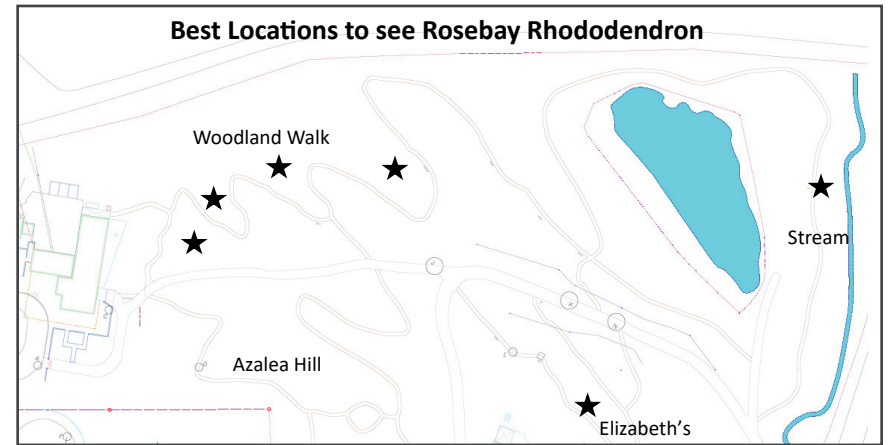
DON HYATT



Typical Rosebay Rhododendron Flower Natural Range of Rosebay Rhododendron

The Rosebay Rhododendron is a large-leaf species that typically matures to about 15' tall and wide, though it can reach up to 30' in time. It is a late bloomer, typically flowering with white to blush pink trusses from late June to late July. These trusses are relatively small compared to other species and especially hybrids, but the late bloom time has made *R. maximum* very valuable in hybridizing efforts to extend the blooming season of large-leaf rhododendrons. It is the most common of the native large-leaf rhododendrons with a huge native range extending from eastern Canada south to Alabama and Georgia with the highest concentration in the southern Appalachian Mountains where it can grow to form dense thickets and dominate the understory. Its large size, shade tolerance, and evergreen foliage make this species a good choice as a screening plant. In fact, this is how it has been most extensively at Jenkins. In addition to hundreds of unnamed *R. maximum*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named selection:

- 'Ballet Slipper' is a Jenkins selection with soft pink flowers with no obvious blotch.
- 'Gable's Red' has a long and interesting history as it originated from the plant known as 'Red Max' in Mt. Mitchell State Park in North Carolina.
- 'Independence' is a nice, deep pink selection. Some believe it is a hybrid.
- 'Mt. Mitchell' is another 'Red Max'. See note from 'Gable's Red'.
- Var. *leachii* is an unusual, dwarf variety of this species with contorted foliage. It was discovered in Green Brier County, West Virginia and was given its name by botanist Bernard Harkness to honor David Leach.



'Ballet Slipper'



'Gable's Red'



'Independence'



'Pink Blush'



Var. *leachii* 'Whirlygig'



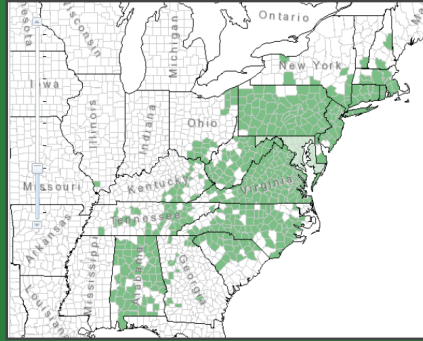
Unnamed white *R. maximum*

Pinxterbloom Azalea

Rhododendron periclymenoides



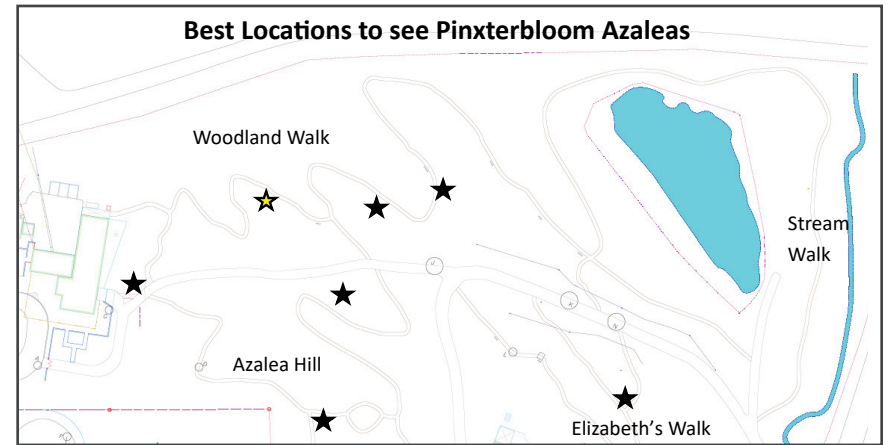
Typical Pinxterbloom Azalea Flower



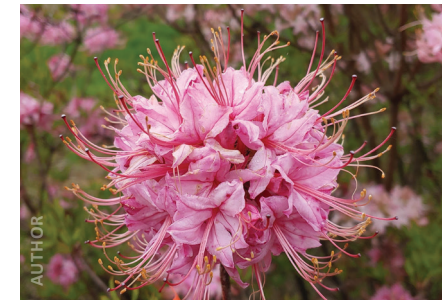
Natural Range of Pinxterbloom Azalea

The Pinxterbloom Azalea is the most common of the native azaleas at Jenkins with several mature specimens dotting our landscape. It is a dense, suckering, medium sized shrub, typically growing to about 6', but capable of reaching 10' or more. The sometimes lightly fragrant flowers are typically soft pink but can be nearly white or even lavender. They bloom slightly before the emergence of new leaves in spring. This species has a large natural distribution growing from New England down to Georgia and Alabama. Pinxterbloom makes an outstanding garden plant and the collections at Jenkins includes the following named selections:

- 'Lavender Girl' is a selection that has slightly lavender blooms and a diffused white blotch.
- 'Orchid Ombre' is a Jenkins selection with vibrant lavender pink flowers that intensify with age.
- 'Paxton's Blue' is a selection that has showy lavender blue flowers.
- 'Purple' is a selection with lavender-purple flowers. It was discovered in Lancaster County, South Carolina.
- 'Starfish' is a Jenkins selection with twisted bottom petals – horizontal on some, straight down on others.
- 'Stiff Upper Lip' is a Jenkins selection with dark pink flowers, each with a bright white top petal. As the flower ages, the color fades and the white petal becomes less pronounced.



'Orchid Ombre'



'Spaldeen'



'Starfish'



'Stiff Upper Lip'



'Plyler's Paintbrush'



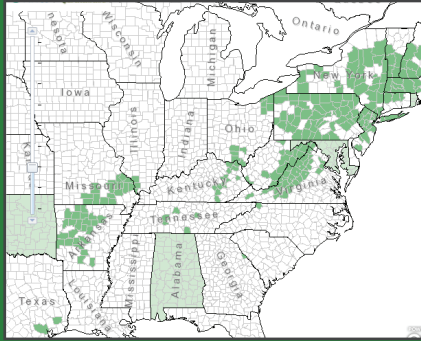
Unnamed *R. periclymenoides*

Roseshell Azalea

Rhododendron prinophyllum



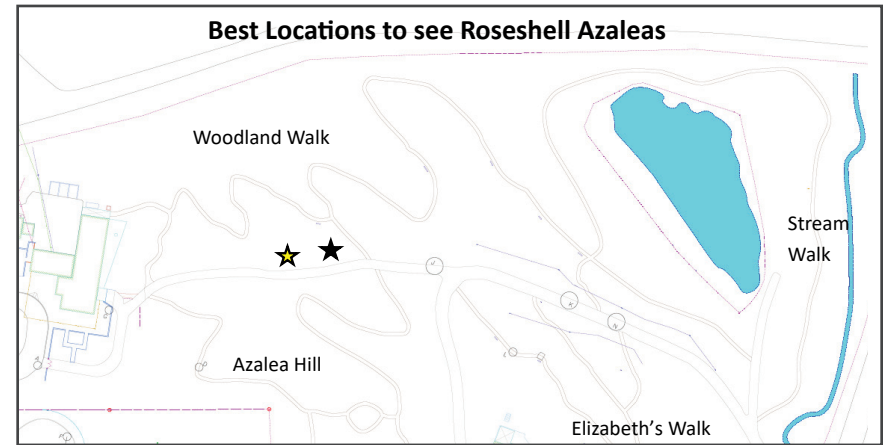
Typical Roseshell Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Roseshell Azalea

The Roseshell Azalea is an upright, rounded deciduous shrub that typically grows to about 6'. The attractive rosy-pink flowers have a strong, yet delightful, clove-like fragrance and emerge before or with the spring leaves. This species grows naturally from southwestern Quebec, through New England and northern Ohio, to the higher elevations of the Appalachian Mountain Range. There are also populations in the Ozark Plateau of Arkansas and Missouri. It is extremely cold hardy, but not so heat tolerant, and typically occurs on north-facing slopes and wooded ravines along streams in the warmer regions of its range. If sited properly, this is a knockout in the landscape. In addition to a handful of unnamed *R. prinophyllum*, the collections at Jenkins includes one named selection.

- 'Frank Abbott' is frequently listed as *R. prinophyllum*, but this is not quite correct. 'Frank Abbott' is a hybrid of *R. prinophyllum* and 'Miss Louisa Hunnewell' developed by Frank himself in Grafton, Vermont. It retained the dark pink color and spicy fragrance of *R. prinophyllum* and was widely sold and distributed by Weston Nurseries. This was such a loved plant, that it now accompanies the gravestone of Frank and his wife, Jane in the Saxtons River Cemetery in Vermont.



'Frank Abbott'



Unnamed *R. prinophyllum*



Unnamed *R. prinophyllum*



Unnamed *R. prinophyllum*

Plumleaf Azalea

Rhododendron prunifolium



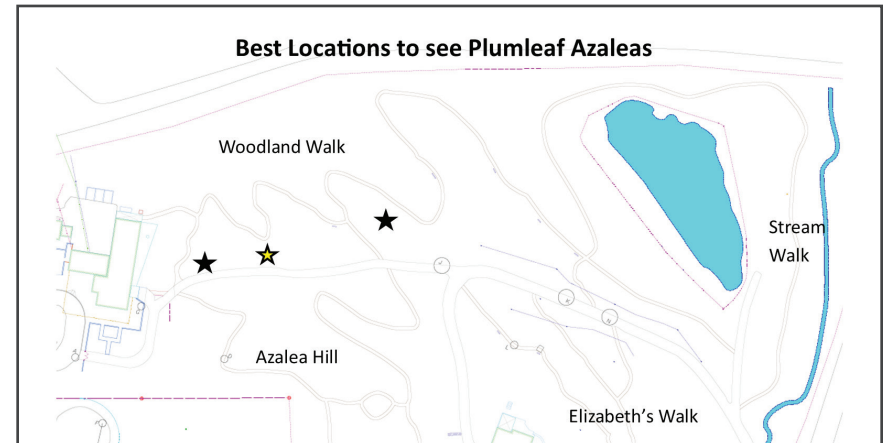
Typical Plumleaf Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Plumleaf Azalea

The Plumleaf Azalea is a medium to large deciduous shrub that grows to about 8-10' tall. It is a late-blooming species (same time as *R. arborescens* var. *Georgiana*), flowering in summer well after the leaves have emerged and well after most other plants have finished. The flowers range from yellow orange to intense red and are framed nicely by the attractive, dark green foliage. It is quite rare in the wild with a very restricted natural distribution in southwestern Georgia and eastern Alabama and is now being considered for the Endangered Species List. It grows in wooded ravines, along streams and in mixed forests. With the late bloom time, colorful flowers, and attractive foliage, this species makes a nice landscape plant. It is best grown with afternoon shade as it will prolong the bloom period during the hot summer. In addition to numerous unnamed *R. prunifolium*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named selection:

- 'Best in Show' is a Jenkins selection from the fields of Jim Plyler. It is a knockout selection with intense pink flowers.
- 'Best Red' is a Jenkins selection from the fields of Jim Plyler. As its name implies, it is the reddest of the plants we selected.
- 'Butter Yellow' is a yellow flowering selection made by Allen Cantrell.
- 'John Conner' is a well-performing, nice red selection of *R. prunifolium* found in Harris County, Georgia by Earl Sommerville.
- 'Summer Pumpkin' is an outstanding orange selection made by Jenkins from the fields of Jim Plyler.



'Best in Show'



'Summer Pumpkin'



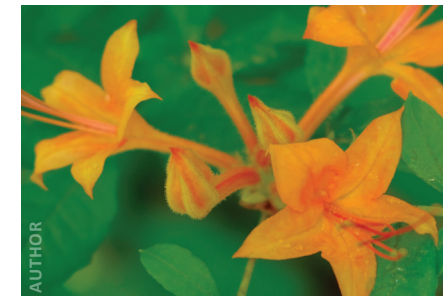
Unnamed *R. prunifolium*



Unnamed *R. prunifolium*



Unnamed *R. prunifolium*



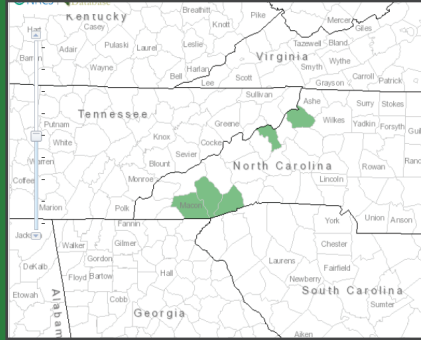
Unnamed *R. prunifolium*

Pinkshell Azalea

Rhododendron vaseyi



Typical Pinkshell Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Pinkshell Azalea

The Pinkshell Azalea is a medium sized, somewhat twiggy, slender-stemmed shrub that grows to about 8'. This is the first of the native azaleas to bloom in the spring, well before the leaves have emerged. The flowers are delicate and varying shades of pink with dark spotting. It is an unusual azalea in that it has almost no funnel-shaped "tube" and has 7 to 10 stamens instead of the 5 that we typically see on deciduous azaleas. This species is incredibly rare in the wild, growing in bogs, thickets, and forests in only four counties in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. Despite its rarity in the wild, it is quite easy to grow in cultivation and happens to be the most commonly planted species as Jenkins. In addition to countless unnamed *R. vaseyi*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named or otherwise noteworthy selections:

- 'Biltmore 2112' is an outstanding pink selection with several specimens that were planted in a large mass the mid-1970s.
- Unnamed dark pink is a plant selected by Jenkins for its unusually dark pink flowers.
- Unnamed White is a white-flowering selection with pink speckling selected from the fields of Jim Plyler.
- 'White Find' is a pure-white-flowering selection.



'Biltmore 2112'



Unnamed light pink *R. vaseyi*



'White Find'



Unnamed dark pink *R. vaseyi*



Unnamed light pink *R. vaseyi*



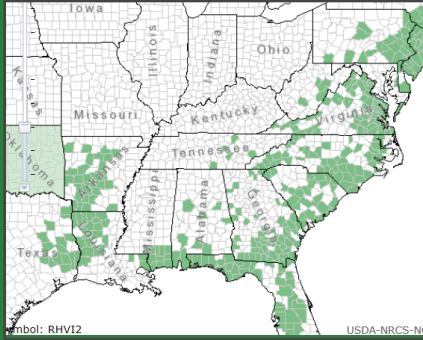
Unnamed white *R. vaseyi*

Swamp Azalea

Rhododendron viscosum



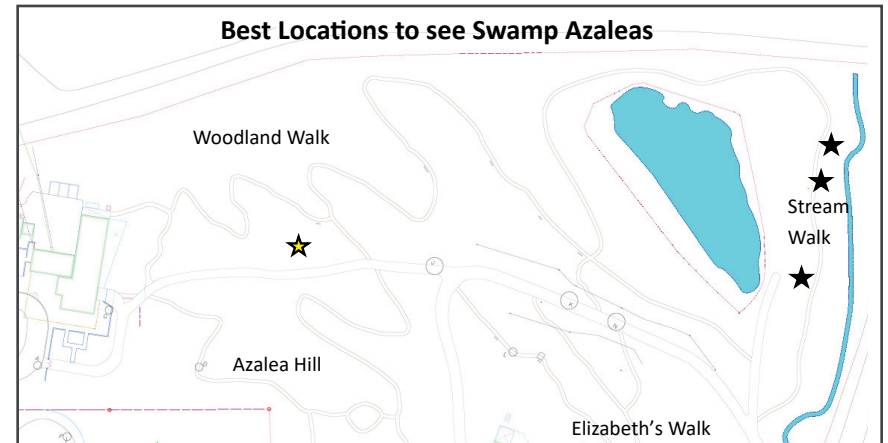
Typical Swamp Azalea Flower



Natural Range of Swamp Azalea

The Swamp Azalea is a small to medium sized deciduous shrub that grows to about 8'. It has relatively small, fragrant (musky clove-scented) white flowers tinged with pink and blooms in late spring, well after the leaves have expanded. The flowers have long, narrow tubes that are covered with sticky hairs. It is a fairly common species with a large native distribution from Maine to Florida and westward to Texas. This species grows best in damp conditions but can grow on upland sites as well with a sufficient organic layer. In addition to numerous unnamed *R. viscosum*, the collections at Jenkins include the following named selections:

- 'Betty Cummins' is a pink flowering selection discovered growing wild in New Jersey by Dave Lewis. It was growing along the side of the road near an old toilet seat, so its original working name was 'Old Toilet Seat'. Eventually, Dave registered the plant as 'Betty Cummins' in recognition of Betty's work in propagating and introducing many new native azalea varieties.
- 'Cumberland Blue' is a selection made by Joe Schild for its bluish foliage.
- 'Delaware Blue' a selection of made by Polly Hill for its bluish foliage.
- 'Pink Mist' is a selection with light pink buds that open to white flowers.
- 'Roseum' is a light pink selection discovered growing wild in Aiken County, South Carolina by the folks at Woodlander's Nursery.
- 'Summer Eyelet' is a selection made by Summer Hill Nursery in Madison, Connecticut for its blue-green foliage.



'Betty Cummins'



R. viscosum bluish pink form



'Roseum'



R. viscosum var. *montanum*



R. viscosum x *cumberlandense*



Unnamed *R. viscosum*

More Native Rhododendrons

The species listed below exist in very small numbers at Jenkins or with few or no named selections.

***Rhododendron canadense* (Rhodora Azalea)** is a low-growing deciduous azalea that has unusual flower structure with no tube, similar to *R. vaseyi*. It is native to the cooler regions of the northeast and into Canada where it grows in cool, moist, peaty soils.

***Rhododendron carolinianum* (Carolina Rhododendron)** is a small-leaved rhododendron, often lumped with *R. minus*, that grows in the southern Appalachians. It is a highly variable species with flowers ranging from white to deep purplish pink. It generally grows to 4 to 8' in cultivation.

***Rhododendron catawbiense* (Catawba Rhododendron)** is a large-leaved rhododendron with dense pinkish purple flower trusses. It has been used extensively in hybridization programs to improve cold hardiness. It generally grows 5 to 10' in cultivation.

***Rhododendron chapmanii* (Chapman's Rhododendron)** is a federally endangered small-leaved rhododendron species native to only a few counties in northern Florida. It has dark lavender flowers, similar to *R. minus*. In fact, at one time, it was considered *R. minus* var. *chapmanii*.

***Rhododendron groenlandicum* (Bog Labrador Tea)** was recently switched into Rhododendron from *Ledum*. It has dense ball-like clusters of small white flowers. It is a low-grower to about 3' and, as its name implies, it is a bog plant preferring cool, damp, peaty soils.



R. canadense



R. carolinianum



R. catawbiense



R. chapmanii



R. groenlandicum

A photograph of a lush garden. In the foreground, there are dense bushes of pink and red azaleas. A wooden bench with a curved back is positioned in the middle ground, partially obscured by the flowers. The background is filled with tall, green trees, creating a dense woodland atmosphere. The lighting is soft, suggesting an overcast day or a shaded area.

A Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens

The mission of Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens is to preserve natural tranquil woodlands for community enjoyment, to showcase native plants and a world class collection of rhododendrons and azaleas, and to promote environmental horticulture through learning, research and conservation.