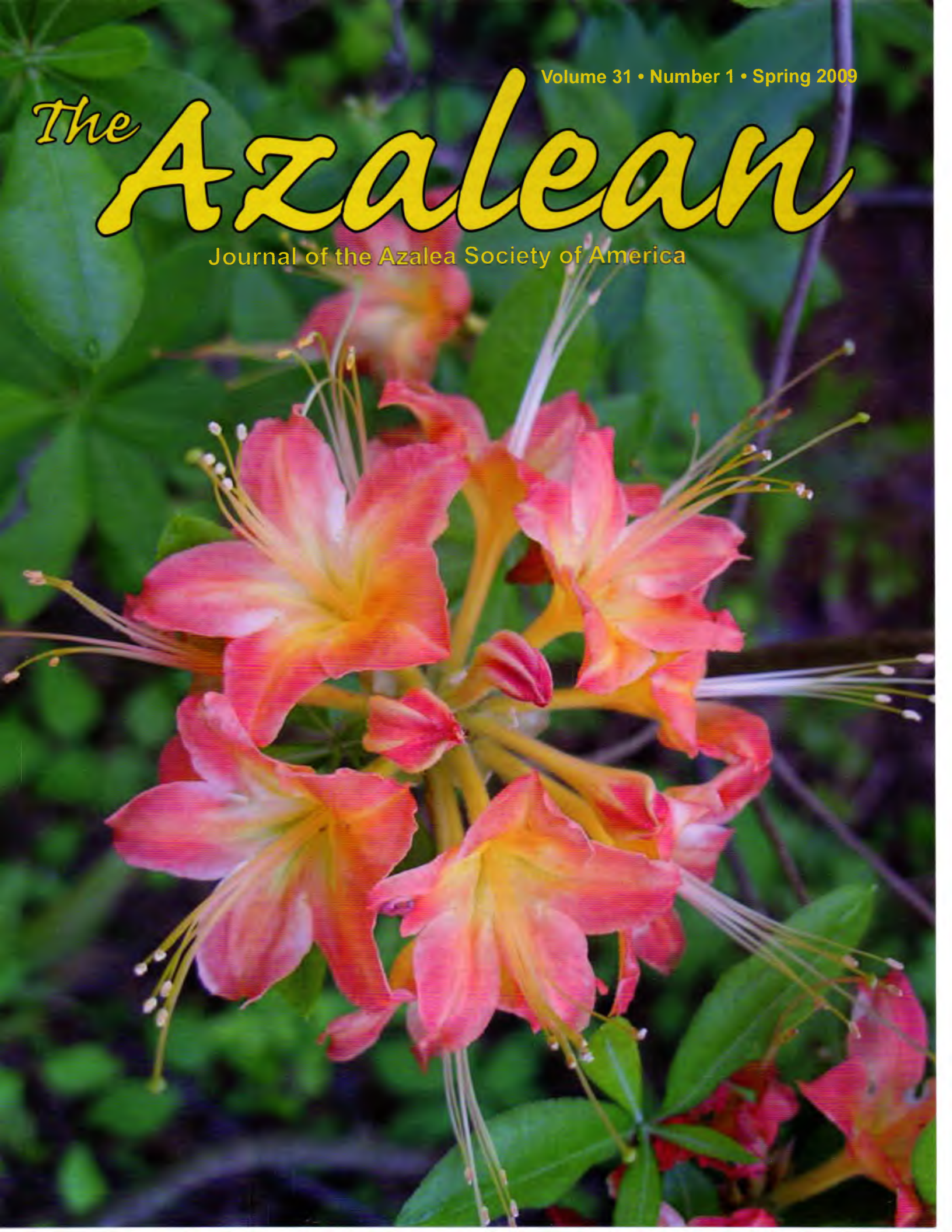


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*The* **Azalean**

Journal of the Azalea Society of America





# President's Letter

John Brown — Cleveland, South Carolina



A recent posting to the American Rhododendron Society's e-mail forum stated: "I don't know what ASA are, but it sounds interesting! Anyone that could provide a web address to ASA?"

I don't believe anyone could have served up a better pitch to hit. First, a little background. The ASA supports an e-mail forum similar to the ARS through which interested people from all around the world share their thoughts on azaleas and rhododendrons, occasionally branching a tad off topic. The general subject thread was on the topic of azalea seed availability, and someone mentioned the ASA seed exchange which prompted the above posting by Mikkel Jorgensen of Hvidovre, Denmark.

Mikkel, I don't know what ASA are either. It is much like the fable of the three blind men who were taken to an elephant. One touched a leg and declared the elephant to be a tree; another touched the ear and declared it to be a large leaf; and the third touched the trunk and declared it to be a large, strong snake. If you can reach out to us, the ASA can be whatever you want it to be. It is our job to make sure that whatever you touch is what you want to feel.

Some see us as the seed exchange. In a few short years, it has grown into a reputable source of wild collected, hand pollinated, and open pollinated seed from all around the world. Aaron Cook's students (read: class credit) process and sort hundreds of packets containing at least 50 seed from dozens of collectors.

Some see us as *The Azalean*, the quarterly journal of the Azalea Society of America. The journal includes information about scientific research accomplishments, activities of the Society, and garden lore. It gives our members a chance to share their knowledge and love of azaleas.

Some see us as a local chapter with a myriad of activities for members and guests, including speakers, plant sales and exchanges, propagation workshops, cutting exchanges, garden maintenance of public and memorial gardens, garden tours, field trips, educational programs for members and the public, and discussion groups on topics of local interest.

Some see us as an e-mail group from the Internet where topics range from all of the above subjects to the parentage of cultivars, the identification of species and hybrids, the history and distribution of azaleas to the latest work on the genetic makeup of species. Last year, the group coordinated their plans to visit the swarms of azaleas in the western Carolina mountains, resulting in small and large groups of azalea enthusiasts at several locations.

Some see us as our annual conventions where we share our knowledge, exchange plants, visit fantastic gardens, and reconnect with near and dear friends.

So, Mikkel, the ASA is an international group of azalea lovers who are many things to many people. We are a loose collection of gardeners, hybridizers, nurserymen (and women), scientists, hikers, and various other social animals. We invite you to join us and share all of our parts and pieces with us.

It has been a great pleasure for me to serve as President of such a group, and I leave office with confidence that the association will continue to grow and maintain its unique status in the plant society world. You have chosen a great group of officers led by Aaron Cook and John Migas to continue the work, and I look forward to seeing them in action.



Photo: Aaron Brown

▲ Kaitlyn Cook processes seeds.

The Azalea Society of America, organized December 9, 1977 and incorporated in the District of Columbia, is an educational and scientific non-profit association devoted to the culture, propagation, and appreciation of azaleas which are in the subgenera *Tsutsusi* and *Pentanthera* of the genus *Rhododendron* in the Heath family (*Ericaceae*).

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# contents

VOLUME 31

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## Features

- 4 **Resistant Cultivars Offer "Built-In" Protection from Azalea Lace Bugs**  
Grant Kirker
- 8 ***Rhododendron alabamense*: The Star that Fell on Alabama**  
Dr. R. Oneal Smitherman
- 12 **Henry T. Skinner: Horticulturist Extraordinaire**  
Barbara Bullock
- 17 **Remembering Horticulturist T.L. Huang**  
Tadeusz Dauksza
- 18 **Georgia's Azalea Lady**  
Ken Gohring

## Society News

- 2 **President's Letter**
- 7 **New Members**
- 10 **Society News**
- 10 **Letters to the Editor**
- 11 **Chapter News**
- 21 **Azalea Mart**

## **On the Cover**

'Double Delight' is a hybrid native azalea from the extensive collection of Joan Adcock of Newnan, Georgia. The specimen is a hybrid of *R. flammeum* and *R. canescens*. It exhibits three colors: creamy center, pale yellow blotch, and pinkish rose petals. It has a slight fragrance. It has grown to eight feet in 25 years.



Photo Joan Adcock



# Resistant Cultivars Offer “Built-In” Protection from Azalea Lace Bugs

Grant Kirker—Wiggins, Mississippi

**A**zalea lace bugs are a major pest of azaleas in both production nurseries and in the home landscape. Adult lace bugs feed on leaves using piercing mouthparts to suck juices from the undersides of the leaves. Lace bug feeding damage results in a chlorotic stippling of the upper and lower leaf surface that diminishes photosynthetic ability of plants (1) and gives the plants a yellowish cast. Severe infestations can lead to reduced plant vigor and eventual loss of leaves. Azalea lace bugs are a fact of life for the home gardener in both northern and southern landscapes.

At the USDA-ARS Thad Cochran Horticultural Research Laboratory in Poplarville, Mississippi, I am evaluating cultivars of azaleas for resistance to lace bug feeding. Host plant resistance is an environmentally friendly, low-tech, low-cost method of control that reduces the need for pesticides to manage azalea lace bugs. In a recent study, we evaluated 33 commercially available cultivars for feeding preference by azalea lace bugs. The number of eggs was used as an indicator of egg laying preference, and feeding preference was measured by counting lace bug feces. These studies were conducted under tightly controlled laboratory conditions to eliminate environmental bias. A full description of experiments can be found in the December 2008 issue of the journal *HortScience*. (2) The rankings presented in this article are pooled results from choice and no-choice bioassays.

## Selected Cultivars

Due to their current popularity, 19 of the Encore® Azalea Autumn series evergreen azaleas were evaluated

in addition to 14 standard cultivars. The Encore® Azalea Autumn series plants have been featured in *Southern Living* magazine and are popular to homeowners because of their long lived blooms. The male seed parent of these plants, *Rhododendron oldhamii*, originated in Taiwan and was introduced into the United States in 1973 and exhibits excellent resistance to azalea lace bug. However, this plant is not cold hardy and is difficult to propagate; thus it has never been put into large-scale production. The remaining 14 cultivars selected were standard cultivars routinely seen in southeastern landscapes. The results of our laboratory experiments helped categorize each of the 33 cultivars as:

**Resistant**—Cultivars least preferred by azalea lace bugs; having the lowest mean values for feces and eggs.

**Moderately Resistant/Moderately Susceptible**—Cultivars with more eggs and feces on leaves than the resistant cultivars, but still with lower values than the remaining cultivars.

**Susceptible**—Cultivars with the most feces and eggs present on their leaves.

## Rankings

### Resistant Cultivars

Description of azalea cultivars following rankings are based on classification presented by Galle (3). Several cultivars were found to be resistant to lace bugs within the

▼ Azalea lace bug feeding on a leaf.



Photo Dr. David W. Boyd, Jr.

▼ Lace bug damage on the upper surface of an azalea leaf.



Photo Grant Kirker

**Figure 1—Azalea Lace Bug Resistant Cultivars**



Photo Grant Kirker

▲ 'Fourth of July'



Photo Ijls Huisman

▲ 'Koromo-shikbu'



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Amethyst™



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Twist™

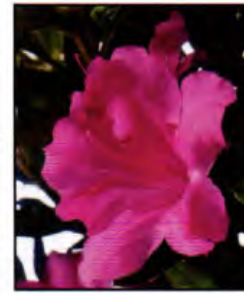


Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Royalty™



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Sangria™



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Cheer™

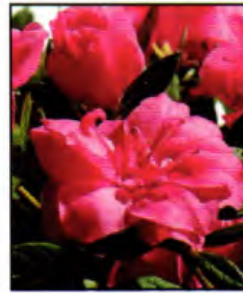


Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Rouge™



Photo Dr. David W. Boyd, Jr.

▲ 'Gumpo White'

Encore® Azalea series: Autumn Amethyst™, Autumn Twist™, Autumn Royalty™, Autumn Sangria™, Autumn Cheer™, and Autumn Rouge™. Autumn Twist™ and Autumn Sangria™ were selected branch sports of Autumn Royalty™ so we would expect similar non-preference by azalea lace bugs.

Other cultivars showing resistance to azalea lace bugs were: 'Koromo-shikibu' and 'Gumpo White'. 'Koromo-shikibu' (*R. stenopetalum* 'Linearifolium') with a lavender split-petal flower. 'Gumpo White' is in the Tsutsuji series and has white blooms. The hardened stems of this azalea are brittle and are easily damaged during shipment, which is why many nurseries that ship plants no longer grow it.

Figure 1 shows the resistant cultivars ranked left to right from highest (lower number of lace bugs eggs/feces) to lowest (higher number of lace bug eggs/feces). We are focusing future research on characteristics of these resistant plants at both the microscopic level and using chemical analyses of leaf compounds in order to explain why lace bugs are less prevalent on their foliage.

#### Moderately Resistant

We observed moderate levels of resistance in the following plants in the Encore® Azalea series: Autumn Embers™, Autumn Bravo™, Autumn Starlite™, Autumn Ruby™, and Autumn Princess™. The cultivars 'Amagasa', 'Hinodegiri', 'Formosum', and 'Mrs. G.G. Gerbing' were also moderately resistant to azalea lace bug. 'Amagasa' is a cultivar belonging to the Satsuki series with red-orange blooms. 'Hinodegiri' is a Kurume hybrid with red-orange blooms. 'Formosum' is a tall upright Southern Indian hybrid of 'Phoenixium' with purplish red blooms.

'Mrs. G.G. Gerbing' (also in the Southern Indian series) is a branch sport of the cultivar 'George Lindley Taber' and has white blooms. The ranked moderately resistant cultivars are presented in order from most moderately resistant (lower number of lace bug eggs/feces) to least moderately resistant (higher number of lace bug eggs/feces) in Figure 2.

#### Moderately Susceptible

In the Encore® Azalea series, the cultivars Autumn Monarch™, Autumn Empress™, Autumn Coral™, Autumn Carnival™, and Autumn Sunset™ were moderately susceptible to azalea lace bug. The standard cultivars 'Midnight Flare', 'Delaware Valley White', and 'Sunglow' were moderately susceptible to azalea lace bugs. 'Midnight Flare' is a Harris hybrid with reddish-pink blooms.

'Delaware Valley White' is a 'Mucronatum' hybrid in the Southern Indian series. Prior research (4, 5) had also determined that 'Delaware Valley White' is susceptible to azalea lace bug. 'Sunglow' is a tall upright Carla hybrid and has reddish-orange blooms. The moderately susceptible cultivars are presented in order from least moderately susceptible (lower number of eggs/feces) to most moderately susceptible (higher number of eggs/feces) in Figure 3.

#### Susceptible

In the Encore® Azalea series, the cultivars Autumn Sweetheart™ and Autumn Debutante™ were susceptible to lace bug damage. Both of these plants have 'Watchet' in their parentage, which was also susceptible. 'Red Slippers' is a Back Acres hybrid with pink flowers. 'Kelly Marie' is a Tom Dodd hybrid of the cold-hardy Korean Azalea (*R. yedoense* var. *poukhanense*) with pink flowers. 'Fashion'



## Figure 2—Azalea Lace Bug Moderately Resistant Cultivars



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Embers™



Photo Camp Hill Azaleas

▲ Autumn Bravo™



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Starlight™



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Ruby™



Photo Dr. David W. Boyd, Jr.

▲ 'Amagasa'



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ 'Hinodegiri'



Photo Grant Kirker

▲ 'Formosum'



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Princess™



Photo Jack Scheper

▲ 'Mrs. G.G. Gerbing'

is a Glenn Dale hybrid with red-orange flowers with some darker stippling down the throat. 'Watchet', mentioned previously, is a Robin Hill hybrid originally developed by Robert Gartrell. It has ruffled pink flowers and a greenish white throat. The susceptible cultivars are presented in order from least susceptible (lower number of lace bug eggs/feces) to

most susceptible (higher number of lace bug eggs/feces) in Figure 4.

### Conclusion

Now that we have determined which cultivars are resistant and susceptible, we can start looking at the physiologi-

## Figure 3—Azalea Lace Bug Moderately Susceptible Cultivars



Photo Martin Davis

▲ 'Midnight Flare'



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Monarch™



Photo Dr. David W. Boyd, Jr.

▲ 'Delaware Valley White'



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Empress™



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Coral™



Photo Grant Kirker

▲ 'Sunglow'



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Carnival™



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Sunset™



**Figure 4—Azalea Lace Bug Susceptible Cultivars**



Photo David McManus

▲ 'Red Slippers'



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Sweetheart™



Photo Dr. David W. Boyd, Jr.

▲ 'Kelly Marie'



Photo Grant Kirker

▲ 'Fashion'



Photo Grant Kirker

▲ 'Watchet'



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Angel™



Photo Corinna S. Murray

▲ Autumn Debutante™

cal, chemical, and possibly even genetic differences between these plants in order to determine which of these factors contribute to the preference or non-preference by azalea lace bugs. With a better understanding of these processes, we could also attempt to transfer some of the resistance seen in certain cultivars to susceptible ones through breeding. This would allow azalea enthusiasts to maintain diverse collections of pest-free cultivars that can be attractive to both insects and humans.

**Grant Kirker** is a USDA-ARS Research Entomologist.

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## New Members

### Lake Michigan

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# *Rhododendron alabamense*: The Star that Fell on Alabama

Dr. R. Oneal Smitherman—Auburn, Alabama

The Alabama Azalea was from its beginning intended by the Creator to be the State Flower of Alabama. Millions of years before stars fell on Alabama in 1833, He sprinkled seed for the 13 species of the native rhododendrons onto the landscape of Alabama, generally considered to be endowed with the fifth most diverse plant population in the United States of America.

Seeds for *Rhododendron alabamense* fell on the territory almost exactly within the outline which now defines the State of Alabama, with only a few sprinkles scattering into the four adjoining states: Tennessee, Georgia, Mississippi, and Florida (Towe, 2004).

The white, intensely fragrant Alabama Azalea was earlier considered the *Alba* form of *Azalea nudiflora* (Mohr, 1901) (*R. periclymenoides*, ed.). The unique-



▲ *R. alabamense*

Photo Dr. R. Oneal Smitherman



▲ *R. alabamense* x *R. occidentale*

▼ *R. alabamense* x *R. flammeum*

Photo Dr. R. Oneal Smitherman



▲ *R. molle* x *R. alabamense*

▼ *R. alabamense* x *R. canescens*

Photo Dr. R. Oneal Smitherman



Photo Dr. R. Oneal Smitherman



Photo Dr. R. Oneal Smitherman



ness of the plant was determined by Wilson and Rehder (1921) for their monograph on azaleas. The assigned scientific name *Rhododendron alabamense* Rehder and common name reflected the fact that *R. alabamense* was distributed almost exclusively within the state and was widespread on acidic upland soils derived from sandstone and chert (Lacefield, 2000). Even in Alabama's Black Belt of alkaline soils, ancient geologic upthrusts and oceanic deposits have provided havens of residence for the Alabama Azalea.

Unfortunately, this yellow-blotched beauty with spicy/lemony fragrance, which can alert the passerby to its presence from hundreds of feet away, is being rapidly decimated by hardwood timber harvest, by real estate development, and by herbicide use on rights-of-way.

To prevent the further loss of genetic material from the remaining sub-populations of the Alabama Azalea, the author, with collaboration from private and public entities, is in the process of assembling a research/display collection of *R. alabamense* at the Davis Arboretum at Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama. Specimens of certified origin from across the entire range of distribution are being solicited. He is working with other arboreta, botanical gardens, and nature preserves to execute a plan to increase availability of the Alabama Azalea through directed seeding and vegetative propagation, while maintaining genetic diversity.

Further efforts will involve publicizing the rapid decline of the entire rhododendron genus in Alabama. (A recent trip to five sites identified from Auburn University and University of Georgia herbarium records for *R. alabamense* was devastating. All five sites had been wiped out by hardwood timber harvest).

Plantings of *R. alabamense* in public places, using seedlings or cuttings, are being planned to help raise awareness of this unique plant, while sustaining the genome. An effort is being organized to raise the Alabama Azalea to its rightful position of Alabama State Flower, replacing the exotic *Camellia japonica*. This activity, likely to be controversial, is projected to bring attention to the threatened/endangered status of many of the Southeastern native rhododendrons.

### **Breeding Potential of the Alabama Azalea**

The Alabama Azalea, which starts bloom from the second to third week of April, depending on latitude, is hardy in both sun and shade and is one of our best for the garden. This promiscuous diploid (Jones et al. 2007) can be crossbred with Exbury hybrids (usually tetraploids) such as 'Gibraltar' and 'Klondyke', or with its southeastern cousins—both diploids and tetraploids. Further, *R. alabamense* genes can be combined with those of *R. molle* from Asia, or those of *R. occidentale* from

the West Coast of the United States, producing excellent, hardy, long-lived hybrids. Whereas, neither of the exotic parent species will survive more than two to three years in Alabama.

For all (especially fellow Azaleans), I encourage the use of *R. alabamense* in the garden and in your breeding efforts. Finally, I ask for your help in conserving this important azalea, and would welcome any information which might lead to an addition to the genome/research/display collection in the Davis Arboretum at Auburn University.

**Dr. R. Oneal Smitherman** is professor emeritus at Auburn University International Center For Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures, Auburn, Alabama. He is the 2008 Recipient of the W. Kelly Mosely Environmental Award for Azalea Conservation in the Donald E. Davis Arboretum at Auburn University. His e-mail address is auburn-fish@gmail.com. His phone number is 334-332-3145.

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# Society News

## Azalea Research Foundation proposed

During the 2008 ASA Annual meeting, President **John Brown** made a motion to form a study group to determine the feasibility and development of a plan to create a research foundation within the society. The motion was approved and **J.O. Thornton**, appointed to chair the group, sought the assistance of **John Brown, Bob Stelloh, John Migas, Buddy Lee, Hale Booth, and Robert Adams** to serve on the study group committee.

The group determined that a research foundation had been discussed over the last few years but was never brought to fruition even though there was never any real opposition. It was noted that many horticultural societies and organizations in the horticultural industry have had such a structure in place for many years. The results of their efforts have been favorable.

The study group determined it would be more than worthwhile for the ASA to proceed, thereby fulfilling an objective of its mission statement. The group also concluded the benefits would bring added value to the standing of the ASA among other societies while providing opportunities for research in pursuance of their concerns in respect to the growing and promotion of the azalea.

The Azalea Research Foundation would operate as a standing committee of the ASA to promote and support activities in the areas of classification, hybridization, culture, and education, through funding of appropriate

scientific and advanced studies and related activities that are of value to the ASA. The goals and objectives of the ARF are to solicit charitable donations to be used solely to provide grants to individuals and/or institutions to pursue areas of research of interest to the ASA and to document the results of such research.

The group recommends the ASA Board of Directors approve and adopt the plan. The group also suggests the BOD do so prior to the 2009 ASA annual meeting. This would allow the ASA president to proceed in appointing a Chairperson, who would then be able to form the foundation committee and prepare for a formal introduction at the annual meeting.

## National membership meeting planned

The ASA will host its annual national membership meeting at 7 p.m., Saturday, May 2, 2009, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel - Dulles Airport, 2200 Centreville Road, Herndon, Virginia.

Newly elected ASA officers will be installed during the meeting. (See page 87 of the Winter 2008 issue of *The Azalean* for the Nomination Committee report.) A ballot was included in the Winter 2008 issue of *The Azalean* and must be received by April 1, 2009.

## Board of Directors meetings set

The ASA Board of Directors will meet from 2 to 4 p.m., Friday, May 1, 2009, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel - Dulles Airport, 2200 Centreville Road, Herndon, Virginia.

A second Board of Directors meeting is scheduled from 7 to 8:30 a.m., Monday, May 4, 2009, providing an opportunity for newly elected officers to discuss new business.

## Letters to the Editor

### Where to find azalea cultivars?

I bought a plant labelled "Poukhanense Compacta" at a local nursery last summer. It looks like the label suggests—a compact form of Poukhanense. However, I cannot find mention of such a form in my reference books.

Can anyone tell me whether this is a recognized form, or the figment of some marketing man's imagination?

**David Purdy**  
dandepurdy@cox.net

Letters to the Editor  
may be submitted via e-mail to  
theazalean@gmail.com or

by mail to P.O. Box 632537, Nacogdoches, TX 75963

▼ Dr. Charles H. Evans, president of the Brookside Gardens Chapter, presenting a \$500 check to Ms. Stephanie Oberle, director of Brookside Gardens, in support of the 2009 Green Matters Symposium. The Green Matters Symposium, an annual event at Brookside Gardens, highlights a broad spectrum of environmental issues.





# Chapter News

## Brookside Gardens

*Charles Evans, Past President*

At its annual meeting on December 7, the Brookside Gardens Chapter awarded its Frederic P. Lee Commendation to **Bobbi McCeney** for her many years of service to the chapter. A long-time member, no job has been too big or too difficult for Bobbi to tackle—whether it was planning and executing a formal national meeting luncheon in the midst of a flower show, providing a judge's breakfast in support of the annual azalea flower show, or hosting a chapter picnic at her home, serving as a flower show judge, or donating interesting plant material from her yard for the sales and auctions sponsored by the chapter.

The F. P. Lee Commendation, established in 1982, is awarded each year for distinguished contributions to furthering the knowledge of propagation, care, and general appreciation of azaleas; and for outstanding participation in chapter activities. For a list of previous recipients, see the chapter's Web site at: [www.azaleas.org/bgawards.html](http://www.azaleas.org/bgawards.html).

The speaker for the program was Anne Brooks, and her presentation was entitled "Flowering Shrubs for the Washington, DC Area." Her slides reflected many years of experience with plants appropriate for the area. In addition, she shared her successes with some fascinating plants not generally recognized as reliable in the region—reminding members that experimentation is part of the joy of gardening. Along with her talk Anne provided an excellent handout listing her favorite shrubs.

The chapter also held its annual election of officers, selecting **Mary Rutley**, vice president; **Robertta Hagen**, corresponding secretary; **Dianne Gregg**, recording secretary; and **Jim McCeney**, treasurer. Due to a technical complication, **William C. Miller III** was elected president at the February chapter meeting.

- ▼ Mary Rutley (left), Brookside Gardens Chapter vice president, presented the 2008 F. P. Lee Commendation to Bobbi McCeney of Laurel, Maryland during the chapter's annual meeting on December 7, 2008.



## Louisiana

*Allen Owings, President*

The Louisiana Chapter held its annual Christmas party at the home of **Margie Jenkins**. The chapter's planned fall meeting in Hammond was cancelled due to Hurricane Gustav. Earlier chapter meetings were held in February and May.

Officers for the chapter were re-elected for another two year term: **Allen Owings**, president; **Tom Milner**, vice president; **Regina Bracy**, secretary; and **Margie Jenkins**, treasurer. Chapter members **Buddy Lee** and **Margie Jenkins** made presentations at the Gulf States Horticultural Expo on January 29 in Mobile, Alabama.

The chapter also plans to host the ASA national convention in 2010, probably during the third week in March. If arrangements can be made, the convention will be headquartered in New Orleans. Members have discussed tours to the north shore area, including wholesale nurseries and Margie Y. Jenkins Azalea Garden. Final details will be made available at the 2009 ASA convention in Virginia.

## Northern Virginia

*Eve Harrison, President*

In August, the chapter held its second annual public auction at Merrifield Garden Center in Fairfax. It was well attended and the plants sold for awfully high prices, especially anything purple! The auction did far better than anticipated, in large part due to the contributions of landscape azaleas by **Carolyn Beck**. **Don Hyatt** and **Bob Harrison** regaled the bidding audience while providing wonderful videos and accompanying music for each azalea presented. Each non-member was presented with a gift of an azalea for coming, and a large food table attracted people continuously.

Chapter members spent the fall preparing for the ASA national convention. Members are proud and excited to have visitors tour local gardens and peruse the wonderful plant sale. See you there!

## Oconee

*Ruth Mellon, Secretary*

The chapter's fall meeting was held at the Rockdale County Extension Office in Conyers, Georgia. It was a joint meeting with the American Rhododendron Society. **Joe Coleman** presented a slide show of beautiful azaleas photographed during the ASA national convention in Asheville, North Carolina.

The chapter also participated in the third annual Rockdale Master Gardeners plant sale held September 29. **Frank Bryan** made an informative presentation on native azaleas, and chapter members staffed a booth providing information on the care, diseases, and general tips for growing azaleas. The chapter also sold azaleas, including several natives donated by members and the Riverside Azalea Farm.



# Henry T. Skinner: Horticulturist Extraordinaire

Barbara L. Bullock—Washington, D.C.

*Editor's Note: As Presented at the National Convention of the Azalea Society of America, Asheville, North Carolina, May 1, 2008.*

About seven months before writing this paper, John Brown contacted me to see if I would give a presentation about the second director of the National Arboretum, Dr. Henry T. Skinner, for the May "Honor the Greats 2008" ASA National Convention in Asheville, North Carolina. Having only a passing knowledge of Skinner's work with native azaleas, I willingly accepted as the research required would broaden my knowledge of azaleas, particularly with the natives of eastern North America.

I began to research the topic which included memoriams, published papers, speeches, and historic photographs. I visited some of the locations most likely to have collections of Henry T. Skinner (HTS) plants. It has been a very interesting project for me. I have come to learn that Dr. Skinner was a modest gentleman with a slight English accent and a wonderful sense of humor. During his career, he received numerous awards and medals from domestic and foreign organizations for his achievements in horticulture. He was responsible for introducing numerous plants, including 'Cornell Pink', a pink form of *Rhododendron mucronulatum*. Dr. August E. Kehr wrote, "Among the specialists in the native Eastern rhododendrons and azaleas, Dr. Skinner stood at the apex."<sup>1</sup>

*The Boxwood Bulletin*<sup>2</sup> included a brief overview of Henry Skinner's life, which reads in part: "Born at East Sutton, Kent, England, in 1907, Skinner attended the Wisley School of the Royal Horticultural Society from 1923 to 1926, immigrated to the United States in 1927 to become a student assistant at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University from 1927 through 1929 where he studied under the famed plant explorer E. H. Wilson. He was an instructor of horticulture at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York from 1931 to 1940, earning both his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in 1936 and 1938 respectively from Cornell in Horticulture. While at Cornell, he concentrated on the development of their tree and shrub collection. During this period and while at the Morris Arboretum, Skinner began researching his interest in azaleas native to the southern Appalachian Mountains and Eastern United States—collecting and studying their classification. In 1940, he became curator of the Morris Arboretum, University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, where he served for three years. Becoming a naturalized United States citizen in 1943, he served in the U. S. Air Force from 1943 to 1945. Following World War



▲ Dr. Henry T. Skinner

II, he returned to the Morris Arboretum, married the former Anne Wood in 1951, and earned his doctoral in biology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1952. He joined the U. S. National Arboretum (USNA) as Director that same year on September 29 at the age of 45."

During the next 20 years, Skinner saw unprecedented growth at the USNA. Through the efforts of present day boxwood curator, Lynn Batdorf, we now have a chronology of events of the National Arboretum spanning decades.<sup>3</sup> Following is a brief listing of some of the highlights of Skinner's tenure at the USNA:

- 1952 The paving of 4.5 miles of road; a pond was added in Asian Valley.
- 1953 The addition of nearly 300 *Ilex* species and cultivars; the Plant Records Office begins accessioning plant materials.
- 1954 The addition of 37 *Rhododendrons*, 19 *Buxus* and many azalea species from the Morris Arbo-



Photo Courtesy United States National Arboretum

▲ The USNA Morrison Garden was dedicated May 3, 1954.



Photo Courtesy United States National Arboretum

▲ Fern Valley, April 1959.

return; 85 cultivars of azaleas propagated from F. P. Lee's personal garden in Bethesda, Maryland; more than 100 hybrid azaleas collected from Walter Allen, Summerville, S.C., and Kingsville Nursery; the Morrison Glenn Dale Azalea Garden was completed and dedicated. In reference to the newly completed Morrison Garden, Skinner remarked, "It will be of immeasurable value for continuous reference for azalea growers the world over."<sup>4</sup>

- 1956 Sixty-seven cultivar azaleas received from England, (Knap Hill, Mollis, and Ghents) from Knap Hill, Sunningdale, and Goldsworth nurseries.
- 1958 The USNA Herbarium was founded; volunteer service was established.
- 1959 The asphalt paving of all 9.5 miles of road was completed; the grounds were opened to the public on weekdays year round and on weekends during peak months.
- 1960 Completion of a 5-acre boxwood collection designed by Skinner; 4-acre Fern Valley was dedicated.
- 1961 New green house complex was completed; the Administration Building was completed and dedicated by 1964.
- 1967 Grounds open seven days a week; beginning of the Washington Youth Garden; new water lines and drain tiles on Mount Hamilton (Azalea Collection).
- 1969 For the 10th anniversary dedication of Fern Valley Nature Trail, the entrance planting is redesigned by Skinner, who in his graduate school years wrote: "Only through a clear appreciation

of that design which takes into account the laws of rock distribution and occurrence, as well as habits and uses of plants, can nature's unity, simplicity, and ultimate beauty be truly reproduced in the garden."<sup>5</sup>

- 1971 The Azalea Loop trail display was increased to 1,900 plants; the Frederic P. Lee Memorial Garden was dedicated.
- 1972 A severe frost damaged a large portion of the camellias after a warm 78°F December day.

Throughout the years, Skinner surrounded himself with qualified staff whose names are well respected in the horticulture field, such as William Kosar, Gene Eisenbeiss, Fredrick G. Meyer, Theodore Dudley, Frank Santamour, William Ackerman, and Donald Egolf.

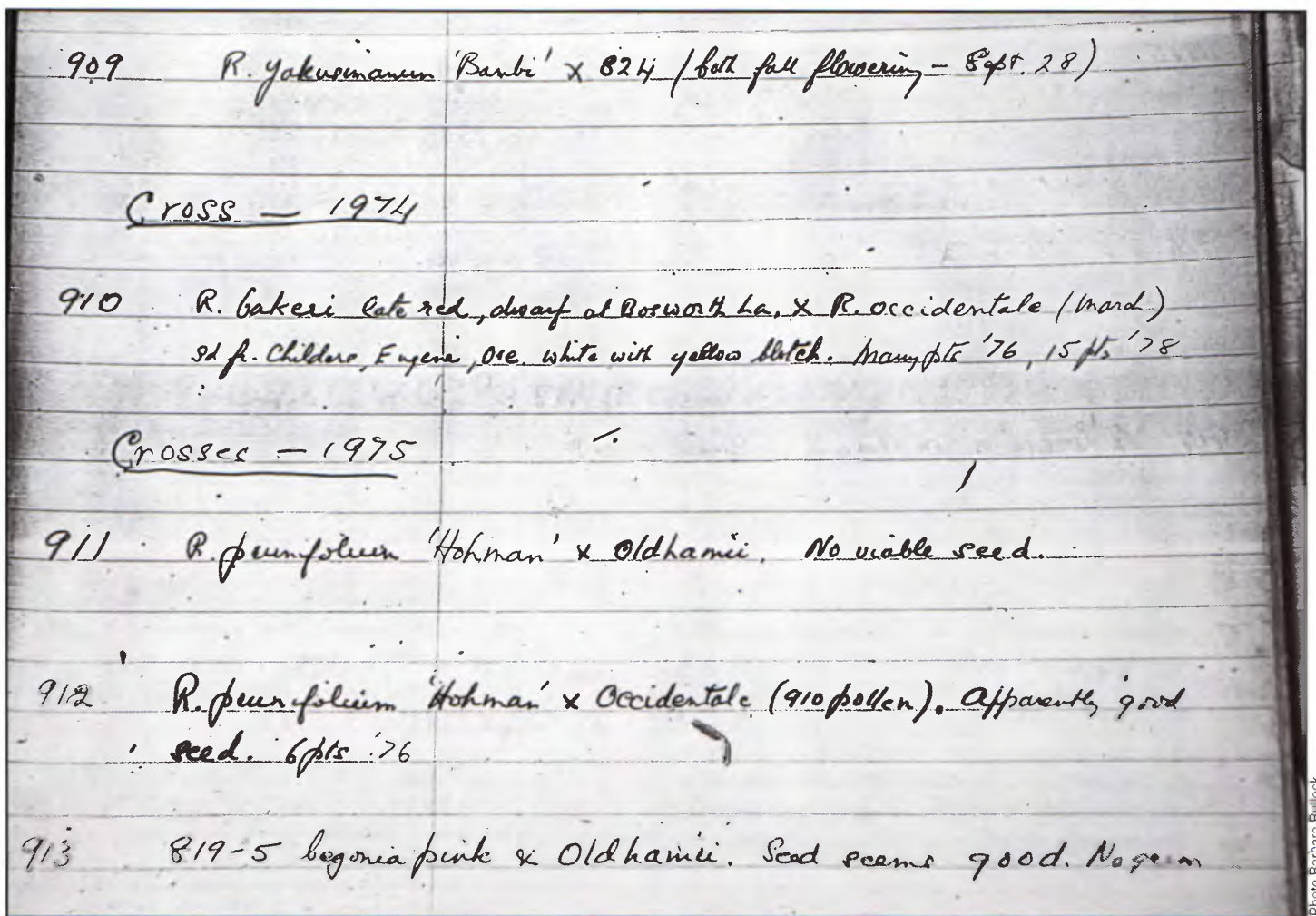
*The Boxwood Bulletin*<sup>6</sup> also includes one of the more comprehensive listings of Dr. Skinner's contributions to horticulture. "He was renowned for his pioneering work on the taxonomy, breeding and distribution of native American

▼ The USNA administration building opened in 1961.



Photo Courtesy United States National Arboretum





▲ An excerpt from Skinner's stud book which is archived at the Morris Arboretum.

azaleas. He designed that gardener's mainstay, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Hardiness Zone Map, developed in 1960. In a career spanning 60 years, he published more than 250 research and educational papers in technical journals and periodicals."

*The Holly Society Journal*<sup>7</sup> stated that Dr. Skinner conducted controlled hybridization with numerous holly species while curator at the Morris Arboretum (1940-1952) which resulted in the holly introductions, *Ilex* 'Lydia Morris' and *I.* 'John T. Morris' named after the founders of the Morris Arboretum. Skinner appreciated the importance of holly as a landscape plant, and always promoted its use in the environment. His foresight and vision was responsible for the holly research program at the USNA with William Kosar and then Gene Eisenbeiss as principal investigators. The authors of *The Holly Society Journal* article suggest, "There is absolutely no question that Dr. Skinner made the National Arboretum what it is today—a leading institution for collections, hybridization, and basic research. While serving as Director of the U. S. National Arboretum, Dr. Skinner brought the Arboretum into national and international focus and fame." Henry Skinner retired from the USNA December 15, 1972.

In his memorial to Dr. Skinner, "Azalea Classic,"<sup>8</sup> Dr. John Creech reflects on some of the characteristics of his

former colleague and neighbor as both men found serenity in retirement among the mountains and hillsides of Hendersonville, North Carolina, after serving as directors of the USNA. He writes: "Dr. Skinner distinguished himself by developing the research and educational programs of the National Arboretum, including the acquisition of the famous Gotelli dwarf conifer collection, Fern Valley, and the development of the beautiful administration building. Under his leadership, the National Arboretum grew from infancy to a mature institution of national and international stature. Dr. Skinner rarely allowed the ups and downs [of his position] to affect his wry sense of humor and patience."

Creech writes "Prior to [Skinner's] death, he was still carrying on breeding and selection of deciduous azaleas [in Hendersonville] and apparently planned to name some of his most outstanding seedlings." Many of his azalea crosses never made it to the distribution phase, but thanks to his many articles on the native azaleas, the American public is aware of the wealth and beauty of our own native azaleas growing around us. His studbook is available both in its original form at the North Carolina Arboretum and as a copy which I saw at the Morris Arboretum should anyone wish to replicate some of his crosses. The book contains notes and results of crosses which Skinner made from as early as



▲ Skinner's herbarium collection is housed at the Morris Arboretum.

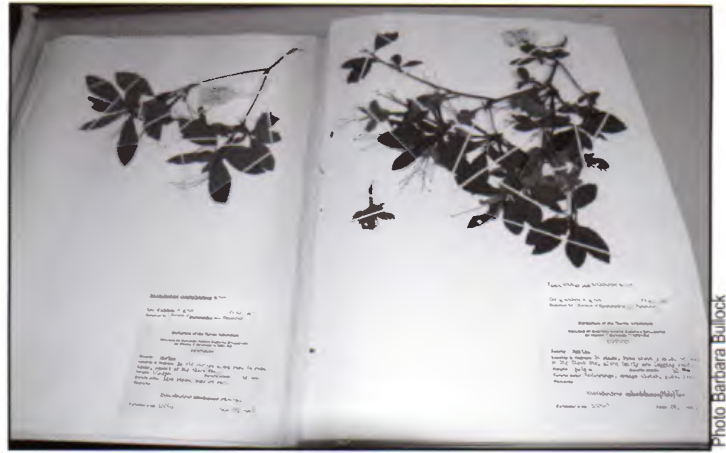


Photo Barbara Bullock

▲ Skinner cataloged more than 8,000 herbarium specimens.

on the section *Pentanthera* in 1993<sup>10</sup>.

Dr. Kron's research reveals that some of the assumptions made by Skinner in his field studies may have been incorrect, possibly due to preferential collecting, particularly with the species *R. cumberlandense* and *R. calendulaceum* and with *R. austrinum* and *R. canescens*. Throughout Skinner's writings, emphasis was placed on natural inbreeding among native species resulting in natural hybrid swarms. While this may have been the case in some instances, Kron's research demonstrates through field studies and careful examination of dried specimens, that most species are phenologically and/or ecologically isolated within a local geographic area. We now understand that in some cases hybridization was not necessarily the reason for the observed variation. There was not as much hybridization as previously assumed. Sometimes a variation is due to just forms or variants found within a species. Regardless of the changes in classification, Dr. Skinner provided invaluable documentation of the variation of form and color in the native azaleas. His herbarium collections alone have benefited taxonomists and horticulturists alike.

Dr. Skinner credited Dr. W. H. Camp as well as Dr. J. R. Schramm, director of the Morris Arboretum, as being largely responsible for the initiation of the venture. ('Camp's Red' is discussed in following paragraph.) Skinner began his travels on March 17, 1951 by driving south to Florida to begin his collection of the Florida Pinxter or Hoary Azalea, *R. canescens*, through Alabama to collect the yellow Florida Azalea, *R. austrinum*. Then he traveled west to Texas in hopes of collecting the pink azalea, *R. alabamense* only to find new forms of the Swamp Azalea, *R. viscosum*, and then turned around and went back into Georgia for later blooming forms. This was the method and structure of his travels for the next 21 weeks.

By mid-April, he had traveled up into the hills of central Georgia and collected the Oconee Azalea, *R. flammeum*, and into the coastal plains of South Carolina where he found the southern reaches of the Coast Azalea, *R. atlanticum*. Then he drove northward up the coast to Williamsburg, Virginia, where he discovered and collected the Pinxterbloom Azalea, *R. periclymenoides*. From there he went upland into

1939 until his death in 1984, and includes his work with hollies, boxwood, azaleas, and other genera. The current Morris Arboretum curator, Tony Aiello, recently sent a copy of the studbook to the USNA.

### For the Love of Native Azaleas

While studying at the University of Pennsylvania and serving as curator of plant collections at the Morris Arboretum, Skinner undertook a monumental trip to study at close hand all of the eastern North American azaleas in their native habitats. His trip is chronicled in its entirety in the *Morris Arboretum Bulletin*<sup>9</sup>, and reprinted in *The Azalean* in 1986, Vol. 8, numbers 1 and 2. It is also available on-line at the University of Virginia Web site (see endnote).

For 21 weeks in 1951, Skinner drove a Chevrolet delivery truck more than 25,000 miles in pursuit of native azaleas. From this major field study, more than 8,000 herbarium specimens and 500 living plants were collected. The herbarium specimens are now mounted and stored at the Morris Arboretum. Many of these have been annotated by Dr. Kathleen A. Kron while conducting research for her definitive work





▲ Skinner, right, at a December 1959 tree planting at the US National Arboretum.

the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia to seek darker forms of *R. periclymenoides* by mid-May. He then drove south again to re-collect later forms of previously collected species. On his return to the mountains of Virginia, he collected the Roseshell Azalea, *R. prinophyllum* and headed west into West Virginia to collect more. He headed back north towards Delaware to collect more *R. atlanticum* and by May 21, back to Philadelphia for three days of rest.

Back on the road, he collected the Flame Azalea, *R. calendulaceum*, in West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Georgia, and Tennessee, stopping from time to time to collect more specimens of earlier species. He found the Cumberland Azalea, *R. cumberlandense* on Gregory Bald, recorded in one of the few mentions of an actual overnight hike away from his truck that he undertook. I found this passage quite enjoyable to read having been there myself. He called the azaleas on Gregory Bald “bewildering and almost unbelievable.”<sup>6</sup>

He wrote: “within this marginal region between trees and grass sod supports a peripheral band of a bizarre collection of azaleas—thousands of plants in every imaginable hue from pure white to pale yellow, salmon yellow, clear pink and orange-red to red.” It is no wonder so many of us have made the trek to Gregory Bald to see these azaleas for ourselves.

From his Kentucky collections, he found some of the best reds of the Cumberland Azalea, which is discussed in Fred Lee’s *Azaleas*<sup>11</sup>: “‘Camp’s Red’ is the name given for a group of plants on the summit of Big Black Mountain in Kentucky, named in honor of Dr. Wendell H. Camp, who was among the first to recognize the distinctiveness of the

red azalea of the Cumberland Plateau, *R. cumberlandense*, and whose 1936 specimens from this location are now in the herbarium of the New York Botanical Garden.” Dr. Skinner wrapped up his trip by collecting specimens of the Smooth Azalea, *R. arborescens*, the Plumleaf Azalea, *R. prunifolium*, and the Swamp Azalea, *R. viscosum*. Other azalea species that Skinner collected were *R. serrulatum* and *R. oblongifolium*, which Kron has now merged in with *R. viscosum*.<sup>12</sup> An extensive Web site full of information on Henry T. Skinner, his breeding notes, and the details and transcript of his azalea travels is well worth visiting.<sup>13</sup> American Rhododendron Society members Dr. Sandra MacDonald and George McLellan contributed heavily to the content of the site, and their help was invaluable in gathering information for this article.

#### Conclusion: “Azaleas have few rivals as subjects”<sup>14</sup>

Few of Skinner’s introductions exist today. I personally saw planted groupings of his plants at both the Tyler and Morris Arboretums in Pennsylvania. At the Morris, a sign is erected honoring the former staff member for his contributions. It describes Skinner’s legacy as identifying for the rest of us the versatility and expanse of the eastern North American azaleas.

To David Leach, a respected authority of Rhododendron, Skinner wrote: “It has been fascinating in the extreme to follow species after species through its entire range and watch the transition of characters from one point to another.” In the same letter regarding a lost cultivar of *R. calendulaceum* ‘Michaux’s Yellow’ he wrote: “It would seem a foolish task to seek something under the name ‘Michaux’s Yellow’—nearly all the early large-flowered forms [of *R. calendulaceum*] of the Southern Smokies are good—name one of them any name at all and reproduce it.” In other words, as Henry Skinner knew then, the original ‘Michaux’s Yellow’ was lost as are most of Skinner’s selections today.

Still all is not lost. As long as growers continue to raise azaleas from seed collected from the flowering azaleas of the southeastern United States, beautiful forms will exist. Dr. Skinner wrote in the opening lines of his dissertation: “Azaleas have few rivals as horticultural subjects because of their wide color range and profuse bloom, as well as their relatively easy culture on suitably acid soils [...] the native American azaleas have a range of variation which, in its potentialities, is unequalled in any of the exotic groups.” Many of these potentialities are being realized through the hard work and breeding efforts of the Beasleys, the Dodds, the Mezitt family (Weston Group), the late Gene Aromi, and the Arnesons (whose hybrids I picked up at the Rockville ASA Convention in 2006), as well as others. Dr. John Creech’s final words for Henry T. Skinner seem fitting to be placed here, “We will miss his presence sorely, but the many contributions he made to American horticulture will command our attention for many years to come.”<sup>15</sup>

*Editor’s Note: Vivian Abney is working toward re-introducing some of Dr. Skinner’s selections at East Fork Nursery.*

Barbara L Bullock is the curator of *Azaleas and Rhododendrons* at the U. S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. She was a speaker at the 2008 ASA National Convention.

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# Remembering Chinese Horticulturist T.L. Huang

Tadeusz Dauksza —Orland Park, Illinois

T. L. Huang (September 1906 – March 2005) was a senior horticulturist of China best known for ornamental plant breeding. He was a consultant for the China Flower Society, and a member of the Mei Flower (Plum Blossom), *Calycanthus* (in America, *Chimonanthus praecox*) and American Camellia Society.

T.L. Huang was born in Zhejiang Province. He moved to Shanghai along with his father, also another famous horticulturist in China. In 1908 his father, Y.Y Huang, founded Huang's Plant Farm. T.L. Huang served as the farm's director from 1924 to 1956. During this period, he became an expert in the study of plant horticulture, including the collection, hybridization, and culture of many popular and rare ornamental plants. Cross-breeding on azalea and chrysanthemum was carried out at that time.

In 1948, he and his father published "HUA JING" which was the first monograph of landscape plants after the Qing dynasty in China. While in Shanghai, he also designed and constructed several beautiful private gardens for local celebrities and merchants.

Huang also worked in Longhua Nursery from 1953 to 1973 (which was reconstructed into Shanghai Botanical Garden in 1972). While at the nursery, he collected more than 100 species of native plants, including azaleas, camellias, and peonies. Unfortunately, most of the work with those collections ended with the Cultural Revolution.

Huang retired from Shanghai Botanical Garden in 1973. But his work in the horticulture continued until he passed away in 2005. Cross-breeding of camellias, azaleas, and cymbidiums fulfilled his old age. Many beautiful camellias and azalea hybrids were distributed not only in China but in America and other countries.

Little is known about the Huang evergreen azalea hybrids created by Mr. Huang because most of his work done before the Cultural Revolution in China was lost. One source of information is the documented observations of Col. Ronald C. Vines (Ret.), reproduced from his 1990 catalog on the Azalea Society of America Web site (<http://www.azaleas.org/index.pl/huang.html>). Col. Vines believed the Huang hybrids were the most important hybrid group of evergreen azaleas in existence, in terms of the diverse bloom size and type, foliage, and plant habit.

Pictures of a few Huangs being evaluated by Auburn University are shown on their [www.ag.auburn.edu/landscape/Huangpage.html](http://www.ag.auburn.edu/landscape/Huangpage.html) page.

*The author expresses his appreciation for the contribution and research performed by Director Hu Yonghong and Ya-Li-Zhang of Shanghai Botanical Garden.*

**Tadeusz Dauksza** is a member ASA Lake Michigan Chapter. His e-mail address is [iltkyao@sbcglobal.net](mailto:iltkyao@sbcglobal.net).



# Georgia's Azalea Lady

Ken Gohring—Marietta, Georgia

One of the most picturesque sites in the South is the city of Newnan, Georgia, located about 40 miles southeast of Atlanta, boasting a population of more than 24,000 citizens. Newnan features scores of attractive homes and is proudly known as the city of homes. Newnan is home of country music star Alan Jack-



▲ Joan Adcock

son. The late writer-humorist Lewis Grizzard, raised in nearby Moreland, attended high school in Newnan. One of the current residents of this charming city is a delightful southern lady, named Joan Adcock. In fact, Joan was a high school classmate of Grizzard. She is a native azalea specialist, who over a period of 25-plus years has accumulated thousands of native azaleas.

Joan was first attracted to native azaleas through the influence of her late uncle and brother. The interest grew and expanded as she introduced her husband and later her two sons to her hobby. She was also influenced by the venerable Fred Galle, director of horticulture at the nearby Callaway Gardens. For several years, Joan attended seminars conducted by Galle, and many of her ideas and practices were learned from these sessions.

The Adcock garden, in full bloom, rivals any garden in diversity of color and bloom quality. The garden has an unusually large collection of natives that is probably the

largest private collection in the Southeast, if not the entire country. Most of Joan's azaleas have been collected from native areas nearby her Newnan home.

The Adcock garden is a part of an attractive small farm located in a rustic area south of Newnan. The home is surrounded by a large planting of mature native azaleas of varying colors that accent the home's perimeter. The home is situated in a sparse pine forest that filters direct sunlight, preventing sunburn of the plants but allowing good light to ensure good bloom set. The main garden is located at the rear of the home and extends into the pine understory.

The Adcock garden consists mostly of Oconee azaleas, *Rhododendron flammeum*, and most likely hybrids of Oconee and the Piedmont azalea, *R. canescens*. Joan's collection also includes other native species, including a large collection of Plumleaf azaleas, *R. prunifolium*. She also has *R. minus* var. *carolinium* in her collection.

The color range of the Adcock azaleas is quite broad, ranging from white to pink to yellow to orange and pure red, with many blooms having multiple combinations of these base colors. Some have described some of the colors as salmon, apricot, peach, butterscotch, and cantaloupe. Terms such as "washed flesh," "rolled gold," "watered rose," and "shrimp pink" are also descriptive of some of the colors present. A large majority of the plants have the most common *R. flammeum* color, orange, with many orangish red cultivars.

The garden consists of several sections with the older areas containing taller plants. The plants range in size from relatively short heights to ten feet, indicative of the mixed heritage of the plants. Normally *flammeum* azaleas top out at six to eight feet, while *canescens* grow up to 15

▼ 'Frosted'



▼ 'Butterscotch Rose'







Photo Joan Adcock

▲ 'Yellow Lace'



Photo Joan Adcock

▲ 'Six Petals'

feet or more. The taller growth of some of the specimens, as well as the wide variety of colors, are indicative of the hybrid nature of many of the plants. The fact that some exhibit a slight fragrance also indicates a hybrid nature. It is also possible that the genetic makeup includes *R. periclymenoides*, *R. alabamense*, and other natives found in mid-Georgia.

One distinguishing feature of the Adcock collection is the number of ball-truss blooms. This ball-truss feature is typically represented in a plant Joan named 'Apricot Ball'. This plant's blooms are a color best described as apricot, with light gold centers. These blooms form in a tight ball as large as a baseball.

Another particular Adcock favorite, 'Double Delight', exhibits a white to salmon center with a bright yellow blotch. A desirable red and orange plant, called 'Star', exhibits a petal form characterized as star shaped. One of Joan's favorites is a beautiful yellow form called 'Yellow Lace' which has mostly light yellow petals with one petal a brighter yellow and ruffled lace-like petal edges.

'Canyon' has a light shrimp colored blossom with a single golden petal. It also features dark pink dots at points where the petals overlap. 'Frosted', a tri-colored bloomer, is a brighter pink with a bright gold petal and darker pink edges on each petal. The center of four of the petals is a light pink, almost white in color. Other unnamed plants in the Adcock collection feature hose-in-hose and double like characteristics.

Joan and her husband Harry started a program of collecting azaleas using a discipline that assured the survival of the collected plants. They worked with timber company personnel to remove plants that would likely be destroyed when sites were timbered. In other cases permission to collect was obtained through acquaintances made with contacts established at the hospital where Joan was employed. Joan's collection discipline includes the following practices:

- a) Collection of plants in bloom. This insures that the collected plant is desirable and worthy of her collection.

▼ 'Jaci's Pink'



Photo Joan Adcock

▼ 'Canyon'



Photo Joan Adcock



- b) Severe pruning of plant. This technique includes the removal of earth around the plants roots and severe cutback of the plant's branches. In his book, *American Azaleas*, Clarence Towe describes this method. In a personal conversation, Clarence revealed that he described Joan's technique, discussed in more detail below.
- c) Planting of collected plants in rotted sawdust. The sawdust is collected from abandoned sawmills and consists of mixed woods. The material is well aged and is likely 20 to 25 years old.
- d) Assurance of adequate watering and fertilization. No fertilizer is applied the first year. Newly planted specimens are watered about every three days. After the first year the plants are usually well established and are not watered on a regular basis. In periods of drought like the experience in the Southeast the last two years, the plants are watered periodically.



Photo: Joan Adcock

▲ 'Apricot Ball'

The Adcock method consists of using a spade to cut the roots around the plant's shaft, getting as many roots as possible. The plant is dug to a depth up to eight inches or more. The dirt around the roots is shaken off, taking care to preserve as many roots as possible. The plant is then placed in a large plastic bag for transportation to the planting bed. Care is taken to prevent any drying of the roots by moistening the roots and placing water in the plastic bag.

Removal of dirt from the roots helps prevent the growth of any wild weeds, and placement in the bag with the dirt removed helps prevent damage. The plants are placed in the rotted sawdust beds. All of the plant's foliage and small limbs are removed, and a decision is made as to how much of the main stalk to preserve. If the amount of roots is substantial, then all of the main trunk up to six feet is preserved. However if there are concerns that the root structure may have difficulty supporting the full trunk, it is shortened, in some cases to six inches. The plant is watered adequately and periodically, especially in dry seasons. Many times the rescued plants will quickly exhibit new growth and sometimes set buds for next year's flowers.

Truly the Adcock garden is a place of beauty, and Joan welcomes visitors. It is a popular site visited by numerous groups from the Newnan area such as master gardeners and senior groups. It is also visited by others interested in native azaleas who travel significant distances to view the plants. At present none of the cultivars are available in the nursery trade, but Joan is considering making some of the select plants available. Such action will enhance our gardens as the plants are truly outstanding.

**Ken Gohring** is a member of the *Oconee Chapter of the ASA* and serves as *president of the Azalea Chapter of the ARS*. His primary gardening interest is native plants, particularly native azaleas.

## Rescuing Wild Plants

While collection of plants from the wild is frowned upon by many plant enthusiasts, it is a practice that saves plants from destruction in many cases. The organized plant rescue program of the Georgia Native Plant Society was discussed in a recent article published in the *Journal of the American Rhododendron Society*, Summer 2008. That program is directed toward rescuing plants from areas being developed primarily in rapidly growing areas of Atlanta, where land is cleared of vegetation in the construction process.

In many cases exceptional cultivars of native azaleas have been saved from destruction. Examples are discussed in Galle's writings, in particular when he describes an area west of Atlanta, that yielded the unusual cultivar 'Chattahoochee' and other plants that were relocated to Callaway Gardens. Prominent azalea authority Earl Sommerville recently registered several outstanding native azaleas that he rescued several years ago from the site of present day Lake Allatoona, located north of Atlanta.

Without such activity these plants would not be available. The primary concern regarding extraction of plants from the wild should be directed toward the wholesale removal of plants for commercial purposes, which usually results in the destruction of plant populations. The aforementioned program of the Georgia Native Plant Society restricts the commercial sale of rescued plants. Exceptions are made for the Society's plant sale which supports the group's programs. These programs include site restoration and the supplying of natives for public gardens.