
Cover Photograph of 'Scherzo'

The cover photograph by William Miller is of 'Scherzo' flowers from plants located and identified by original tags at the Ten Oaks Nursery Azalea Arboretum in Clarksville, Maryland. The arboretum was a result of Ten Oaks participation in the Glenn Dale hybrids distribution program described in the December 1989 article in *THE AZALEAN*. For the past two years, Dick West has been surveying the arboretum, and 'Scherzo' is one of the rare Glenn Dales he has hoped to find.

U.S.D.A. Monograph No. 20, *The Glenn Dale Azaleas*, describes the flowers of 'Scherzo' as, "2-1/2 to 3 inches across, white with Hortense Violet stripes. Occasional branch sport with pale violet center and darker margin." At least 95% of the spring 1991 flowers on the plants at Ten Oaks are of the pale violet center and darker margin, the margin coloring ranging from a very thin edge line to various widths of banding as shown in the photograph. Only one branch of white flowers was found, but there was a small scattering of two and three white blooms elsewhere on the plants. Of all the white flowers, just one displayed any kind of striping: a single, small one-half inch stripe (flake?) of violet. Given this, the flowers in the photograph should all be judged as sports since none are consistent with the official description.

Why the sport flower is so predominant isn't understood. It is very unlikely that the Ten Oaks plants, received in the Glenn Dale distribution program, were all from sport cuttings. It is well that tags were found because proper identification of the forty-year-old plants would probably not have occurred based on a search for the white and violet-striped flower. Mr. Miller has opined that the expected spring 1992 flowering of rooted cuttings taken from these plants in 1990 may provide some insight into the mechanism that controls sporting. If all of the two-year-old plants produce flowers the same as the sport, then it will suggest that the sport may be a more dominant and stable expression of the genetic material than the 'white with stripes' of the official description; this would be consistent with the views expressed by Ben Morrison (Charles Evans and William Miller, "Pattern of Sporting," *THE AZALEAN*, 7:1-2, 1985). However, if the new plants produce flowers that are "white with stripes," then it may be an indication that the sport which predominates these older plants may be a predestined endpoint for a progression that is a physiological function of plant size and age. In such a case, with any given mature specimen of 'Scherzo,' it may be that, when some threshold is met, the original 'white with stripes' flower starts to, or does, disappear, perhaps to reappear on later, rarer occasions only to be ironically mistaken for a sport by those unfamiliar with the cultivar. (William Miller or Dick West would certainly like to hear from anyone who has experience with sports and sporting over long periods of time.) Whatever the case, the parent plants, which have never been trimmed or otherwise cared for, will be monitored over the next several years to note their flowering behavior.

As shown in the photograph, the sport flower of 'Scherzo' can be readily judged as rather attractive and unique. It is probably worthy of propagation for itself. □

Prize for Best Article in *THE AZALEAN*—1990

In 1990 an annual prize for best article in *THE AZALEAN* was announced. The prize was established to encourage authors to submit articles for publication in *THE AZALEAN*. Funds for the prize were donated by five chapters:

Ben Morrison Chapter
Brookside Gardens Chapter
Northern Virginia Chapter
Richmond, Virginia Chapter
Tri-State Chapter

Interest from the prize fund will be used to provide an annual prize of \$100. A ballot listing all articles in 1990 issues of *THE AZALEAN* was included in the March 1991 issue. The ballots have been counted and readers of *THE AZALEAN* have selected the article:

The Enchanting Satsuki
by Ajit K. Thakur, Ph.D.

This article was the second of a two-part series of the same title, the first appearing in the December 1989 issue of *THE AZALEAN*. Part 1 discussed the origin, geographical distribution and various other aspects of the Satsukis, while Part 2 consisted of a short list and description of some of the more distinctive Satsukis. A third article, "Some Old Azaleas: Opening Pandora's Box," by Dr. Thakur will appear in the June 1992 issue.

Dr. Thakur has a Ph. D. in statistics and is well-known in the biomedical field. He is a collector of not only Satsukis but of species azaleas also.

The prize will be presented at the 1992 Annual Meeting, to be held May 16 at Solomons, Maryland. Thanks to the Chapters that sponsored the prize. And congratulations to Dr. Ajit Thakur! □