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## Letter to the Editor

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I find that some of the Brookside azaleas that George Harding gave to me as rooted cuttings do not agree with Barry's translation of Satsuki:

- (1) Yamiji-no-tomoshiba—flowers pale lavender, blooms late April.

Barry: White suffused vivid purplish pink, reddish purple blotch, BG-1137.

Could be: Yakusin—white to blushed purplish pink, early, BG-0942.

- (2) Yama-no-akebono—white with purple stripes, solid purple and sekidera. May.

Barry: White with pale yellowish green blotch. Variation of deep pink stripes to solid self. Early.

Could be: Yama-no-Hara—pale purplish pink, white towards center, occasional strips of darker purplish pink. Midseason, GB-1158.

- (3) Sakuragata—slow-growing low plant, flowers 1 - 1-1/2" at first pink changing to purple. Now white center with colored border, BG-1347.

Barry: White center with deep pink to deep purplish pink, border. 2 - 2- 1/2", upright spreading habit.

This plant resembles the Tamino-no-Yuki that I have but Tamino has no BG number.

For the first two plants one can easily see how they could have been mislabeled somewhere along the way, but this does not apply to the Sakuragata (so-called). Perhaps others may have had similar experiences.

My Glenn Dale azalea 'Alight' is white with a colored border (a la 'Boldface') and is so described under 'Luna'.

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## Verification Study of the Glenn Dale Azalea Collection at the U.S. National Arboretum - 1993

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### Introduction

The foundation for a reference collection of Glenn Dale azaleas was established with the dedication of the Morrison Glenn Dale Azalea Garden at the U.S. National Arboretum in 1954 (Miller 1992). Unfortunately, four decades later, there is no complete collection of Glenn Dales anywhere in the country (West 1992). It seems remarkable that so many cultivars of such a popular hybrid group of azaleas are difficult to find in public or private collections. Fortunately, efforts are being made to locate all of the named cultivars of Glenn Dales that were introduced in the 1940's and 1950's by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (West 1989). Because there are so many Glenn Dale cultivars (454), it is difficult to establish a collection which contains all of them. Several cultivars were never introduced\*, and others have become very rare. Compounding the problem is the fact that many cultivars look quite similar and are difficult to distinguish from one another (Frazer 1983). It is not always easy to see the variations through the eyes of Ben Morrison, the hybridizer of this group, and to recognize the characteristics that he identified when he chose them to be named cultivars.

Two years ago Steve Glenn, an intern from Brookside Gardens, visited the National Arboretum and noticed that many of the Glenn Dale azaleas that were planted outside the walls of the Morrison Azalea Garden were incorrectly labeled. The co-author subsequently initiated a study to check all of the Glenn Dale azaleas at the Arboretum to determine their correct identity. In 1991, Azalea Society of America (ASA) member Frank Sobieski volunteered to assist the co-author one day a week with the verification of Glenn Dale cultivars. As a result of this effort, the magnitude of the task became evident. The project was too large and blooming over too quickly for two people working part-time to complete in one season.

In the Spring of 1992, the Friends of the National Arboretum (FONA) funded the first Azalea Collections intern, Beata Corcoran, to work on the project for four months. In the Spring of 1993, in collaboration with the Men's Garden Club of Montgomery County, FONA funded a second intern, the primary author, to continue the work.

### Identifying Azaleas

Many characteristics are used in identifying azalea cultivars. Leaf size, shape, and color can be important, as well as the size and growth habit of the mature plant. The most important characteristics are the floral ones.

The time of the bloom is very important, especially for Glenn Dales. One of Ben Morrison's goals in the Glenn Dale hybridizing project was to introduce azaleas with a wide range of bloom times.

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\*Dr. Roy Magruder (U.S. Department of Agriculture, retired), after considerable research, concluded that the following clones were never introduced:

Alexandria	Aries	Barchester	Berceuse	Candlelight
Etna	Horus	Orpheus	Pontiff	Touchstone