HONOR ROLL

The following are "Sustaining" and "Endowment" members of the Azalea Society of America for 1996:

L. Malcolm Clark
Jane Newman
Donald H. Voss
Gerald & Myra Bleyer
Bettie L. Donley
Mr. & Mrs. J. F. Duplinsky
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Barbara (Rusty) LaGuardia
William B. McIntosh
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Nachman
Roy Payne
Mr. & Mrs. Richard T. West
Mr. & Mrs. Judson H. Wingard

SPECIAL GIFTS TO THE AZALEAN

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Murray and Inez Sheffield
Don Voss
The Brookside Gardens Chapter
Richard West
Steve Brainerd
Wanda and Keith Suddreth
William C. Miller III

What Does pH Mean?

In azalea culture, one is often confronted with the term "pH". Soil acidity is measured by what scientists refer to as its hydrogen ion concentration and is called for convenience pH. The pH scale is from 1 to 14; 7 is neutral and readings above 7 indicate alkalinity. Readings below 7 indicate soil acidity. Azaleas grow best in aicd soil, pH 4.5 to 6.

CULTURAL NOTES

Azalea Rust Problems

Member Ben Reid related a call he received recently. The caller claimed he had azaleas with rust problems. Not seeing the plants, but assuming he was talking about evergreen azaleas this disturbed Ben.

Doing a little research, I found there are rust diseases out there to be dealt with, like the *Chrysomyxa*, *Aecidium*, *Pucciniastrum* and *Puccinia* species which attack the rhododendron and deciduous azaleas.

I wonder if the caller was referring to the rust-colored spots on the underside of the leaves caused by the "lace bug"?

Now, that's a different story...

Jim Thornton
Conyers, Georgia

Having Label Problems? Try This

In my garden, I have always had label problems. The permanent ink will wash away, birds and squirrels carry them away, plants grow around the aluminum wire...

I have found an inexpensive way to solve this problem. I make a jig to bend a sixteen-inch insulation wire [stiff wires made to hold ceiling insulation between joists 16-inches apart, ed.] into a stake with a loop on which to tie the metal label. This label should be embossed or engraved (Dremel engraver, $16.00).

To make the jig (refer to Figure 1), you need a 12" piece of 2 x 4, one 1-1/2" long, 3/4" diameter bolt, one 12" piece of 1 x 3, three wood screws 1-1/2" long.

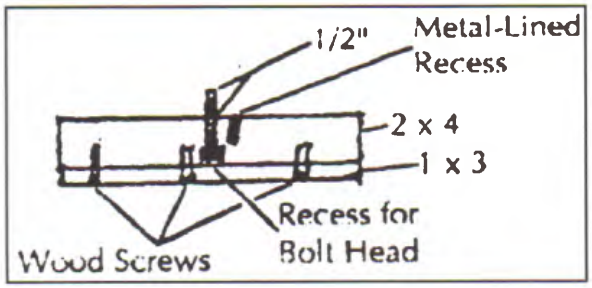

Figure 1

In the center of the 2 x 4, sink a hole with a one-inch bit the depth of the head of the bolt. In the center of this hole drill a hole through the 2 x 4. Place the bolt in the hole and cap with the 1 x 3 using the three wood screws. Flip over. The bolt should protrude about 1/2". Drill a hole as close to the 3/4" bolt as possible. This hole must accommodate the 3/16" stake to a depth of 3/4". It should be lined with metal. Drill the hole large enough to accommodate aluminum gutter guard, cut the aluminum gutter guard, roll it and place it in the hole.

To use, place the insulation wire in the metal-lined recess and wrap around the screw.

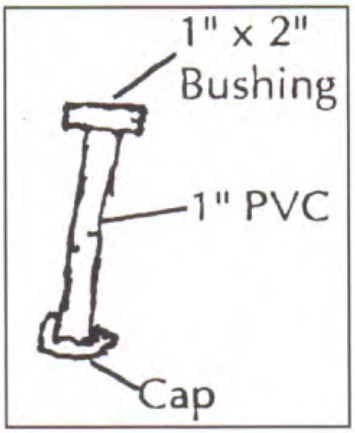

Figure 2

Remove from jig and cut off the bent portion of the wire that was in the metal-lined recess. Bend the loop to touch the stake.

The stake is now ready for priming. To build a priming bucket (see Figure 2), use a 15" piece of 1" PVC pipe. Cap one end and put a 1" to 2" reducer bushing on the other end.

Use a primer (I use Rust-Oleum #7767 Rusty Metal Primer). One quart will do several hundred stakes. Pour the primer into the PVC and place in a concrete block to hold upright. Use a small wire to dip the stakes and hang on the line to dry. A strip of 1" welding wire is very satisfactory. Use Dixie Steel wire because it will bend easily. The Simson brand is difficult to bend. These insulation wires come 100 to a box (around $6.00).

Charles Owen
Cedartown, Georgia

Rooting Azalea Cuttings

The Oconee Chapter has put together a set of tables to serve as a reference for those of you who would like to try your hand at rooting azaleas. For those who are already rooting, maybe you can pick up a tip or two to help remedy those pesky problems you encounter from time-to-time.

Name	Medium	Container	Hormone	Fungicide	Fertilizer	Watering Procedure	Sweatbox-Coldframe	Transplant
Larry Meeks	Fine pine bark mulch and Perlite	96 cell flat	Dip and Grow	None	None	Kept moist under mist	Plants kept under sweatbox	Spring (1 gal)
Jim Thornto	100% ground pine bark	Various - usually 6-cell plastic pack	Hormodin #2	Captan	None	Mist four times daily for two minutes per interval taper off to one cycle/day	Over-winter in sweatbox	Spring (3" or 4" pot)
Earl Hester	100% ground pine bark	jumbo size 6-cell plastic pack	None	None	After rooting Peters 21-7-7 alternate with calmag (Excel) 15-5-15	Misting throughout rooting	Kept in cold frame over winter	Spring (1 gal)
Frank Bryan	1/3 ground pine bark, 1/3 sand, 1/3 potting soil mixture	1 gal. milk carton cut in half with top taped back on during rooting	Rootone	None	None	No regular schedule	Plants left in open in varying degrees of shade - some put in sweatboxes	Spring