

VOLUME 19 NUMBER 3 • September 1997

THE AZALEA

Journal of the Azalea Society of America



1997 Convention Issue

- Kurume Azaleas *page 45*
Identifying Native Azaleas *page 48*
Native Azaleas on Roan Mountain *page 54*



Post Office Box 34536
West Bethesda, Maryland
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President's Letter

Let's see, last issue I asked for your comments concerning our society, I've heard from most of the directors...no surprises but you haven't had time to respond so I won't elaborate at this time. Maybe the December issue and then we'll talk about some goals and objectives for our future.

I'm sure by now you've heard about the ARS and their plans to possibly change their name and our displeasure if it includes the word "Azalea." We've been active in letting them know that we take this as an affront to our twenty years of existence and this should be unheard of from such a prestigious organization as theirs.

By the way, Flowerwood Nursery, Inc., a new member, is introducing some of Buddy Lee's *R. oldhamii* crosses this fall, called the Encore Autumn and Southern Series Azaleas. They've offered to send each chapter some samples for further observation....more about these later.

Art Vance has volunteered to act as temporary "keeper of slides" so if you have any to donate please contact him. This is one of our objectives and requires your help.

One last item, Dr. Hobbs, our editor, is lining up articles for next year, so put your thinking cap on, your pen in hand or computer, and submit something on our favorite subject, "Azaleas".

Jim Thornton □

Azalea Calendar

1997

October 15	Deadline for receiving material for the December issue of THE AZALEAN
October 19	Northern Virginia Chapter Meeting at Green Spring Gardens Park
November 30	Louisiana Chapter Meeting at the LSU Hammond Experiment Station at 2:00PM
December 7	Northern Virginia Chapter Meeting at Green Spring Gardens Park

1998

Jan 15	Deadline for receiving material for March 1997 issue of THE AZALEAN
Apr 30-May 3	Convention and Annual Meeting in Northern Virginia

Azalea Society of America

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 Subgenera *Tsutsusi* and *Pentanthera* of the genus *Rhododendron* in the Heath family (*Ericaceae*).

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THE AZALEAN
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of America, Inc.*

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Table of Contents

VOLUME 19 NUMBER 3 SEPTEMBER 1997

- 42 **President's Letter**
Jim Thornton
- 42 **Azalea Calendar**
- 44 **The 1997 Convention—Atlanta: An Overview**
Robert W. Hobbs
- 45 **Kurume Azaleas—Personal Reflections**
Joe H. Coleman
- 48 **Identifying the Native Azaleas—Part II**
Kathleen A. Kron
- 50 **Exbury Garden Information**
- 51 **Personal Experiences in Hybridizing Azaleas**
Fred Sorg
- 52 **Native Companion Plants**
George Sanko
- 52 **Cultural Notes—Companion Plants**
- 53 **Prize for Best Article in THE AZALEAN—1996**
Dr. Kathleen A. Kron and James O. Thornton
- 54 **Native Azaleas on Roan Mountain, Tennessee**
J. Raymond Goza
- 56 **Society News**
Northern Virginia Chapter
Oconee Chapter
Tri-State Chapter
- 57 **New Members**
- 58 **Azalea Mart**

The publication of the color photographs in this issue is supported by the gifts of Col. and Mrs. Murray Sheffield and the Brookside Gardens Chapter

*On the Cover: Native Azaleas on Roan Mountain, Tennessee
Photographer: Raymond Goza*

The 1997 ConventionóAtlanta: An Overview

Robert W. Hobbs

North Beach, Maryland

When we arrived in Atlanta about noon on Thursday, we were told that because of an abnormally warm spring, the peak of the azalea bloom was past. Nevertheless, we awoke Friday morning to find that the temperature was 30 degrees—if not a low temperature record for that date then very nearly a record.

Thursday evening we were welcomed by the Oconee Chapter of the Azalea Society of America. Following the remarks by Jim Thornton, Fred Sorg described his efforts in hybridizing azaleas. The description of his hybridizing program and some helpful hints for those wishing to do their own hybridization are on page 51 of this issue. Next, George Sanko, co-director of the DeKalb College Botanical Garden, described the use of rare and unusual native plants as companion plants for azaleas. His list of companion plants appears on page 52 of this issue. The attendees visited the DeKalb College Botanical Gardens on Saturday. Robert “Buddy” Lee described his hybridizing program, which is directed at developing fall-blooming hybrids. His fall-blooming azaleas are being distributed by Flowerwood Nurseries of Mobile, Alabama.

We boarded the buses on Friday morning wearing our coats and sweaters to begin a tour of no less than five gardens featuring azaleas and rhododendrons. Lunch was served at the garden of Dr. Charles and Virginia Owen.

Friday evening speaker Dr. Joe Coleman described his garden, which features Kurume azaleas. Dr. Coleman’s talk appears of page 45 of this issue. Dr. Coleman was followed by Ray Goza, who took us on an illustrated trip to Roan Mountain, Tennessee, where native azaleas grow in abundance. Ray Goza’s talk and photographs taken on Roan Mountain are on page 54 and 55.



Dr. Charles Owen describes his garden

Sweaters and coats were not so prevalent when we boarded the buses on Saturday morning for tours of five gardens. We enjoyed a Southern style barbecue lunch in Conyers, Georgia.

Following the Saturday evening banquet and the annual business meeting, the speaker was Dr. Kathleen Kron of Wake Forest University. A description of Dr. Kron’s work on the identification of native azaleas appeared in the December 1996 issue of THE

AZALEAN, and her talk described the identification of native azaleas in detail. An article containing a key to native azaleas begins on page 48 of this issue.



ASA President Jim Thornton



ASA Vice President Bill Bode converses with Fred Minch. ASA Treasurer Bob Stelloh is in the background



ASA Treasurer Bill McIntosh and Membership/Public Information Committee Chairman Bill Miller

Thanks to the Oconee Chapter for their “Southern hospitality”!

Photographs by the author □



Dr. Joe Coleman describes his garden

KURUME AZALEAS— PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

JOE H. COLEMAN
LITHONIA, GA

In exploring the Kurume azaleas, I found that there is a wealth of scholarly information currently available, particularly in Fred Galle's *Azaleas*, in articles by John Creech in the *American Horticulturist* magazine and more recently, a fine article by William Miller in **THE AZALEAN**. Rather than do an extensive history and geographical review, I prefer to accept the plants no matter how dubious their origins or how variable the spelling of their names. Many of these plants look quite similar; their minute differences may be appreciated by Japanese plantsmen, but they are lost on my less discerning eye. Even when I have three of the same plant, each with a different exotic name, I don't worry about the botanical details, I just enjoy their beauty! Where did my attraction to Kurumes come from? Spring in Atlanta means dogwoods blooming with masses of azaleas filling the landscape with color: white, pink, or two shades of red.

I grew up believing that to get a building permit for a red brick house, 'Hinode Giri' or 'Hino Crimson' had to be somewhere in the plans. It seemed to be mandatory to place against the house a veritable hedge of a hue purposely selected for contrast—and I'm not talking subtle here, I mean the loudest clash possible! Okay, it's only for a week once a year, and it could be worse—'Sherwood Red' could have been selected. In older, more established foundation plantings, after ten or 15 years, most Kurume hedges begin to take on a rather moth-eaten appearance. This occurs when plant substitutions are made as older plants succumb to soil compaction, poor drainage, drought, and physical damage. There is nothing like plugging in the wrong shade of azalea and discovering the mistake in the spring. The most astounding foundation hedge I have seen is one of 'Hino Crimson' alternating with 'Snow' against a red brick house. You lose all confidence in the concept of using white to separate clashing colors when you view this "candy cane" effect! In the Atlanta area, there are only four Kurumes: 'Coral Bells' (glowing pink), 'Snow' (white), 'Hino Crimson' (bluish red) and 'Hinode Giri' (scarlet). Imagine my surprise on going to Callaway Gardens, to find a Kurume bowl filled with multiple shades of color: pastels, borders, and subtle tones. Taking this palette of color into the landscape can really expand any design. I think it's a major mistake to limit the colors to be used; the fact that Kurumes completely cover themselves with color is the reason for their use in the first place. A great mass planting of a single color is rather boring, and if the planting is of 'Snow', you had better cover it with a sheet for two weeks after peak bloom, if you don't want to go from an outstanding white blossom to several weeks of brown, spent blossoms that won't let go. I would prefer to mix a lot of colors and let them bloom and fade when they will. With more shades, you have less chance of having two shocking shades planted next to one another. Besides, who said you can't move them whenever and wherever you want!

One of the more attractive aspects of many Kurume azaleas is plant form. Although Kurumes are often purchased as dwarf plants, only the Beltsville Dwarfs remain truly small. Given time, many Kurumes can get quite rangy, growing to heights of eight to 12 feet. When you choose a place to plant them,

consider the light conditions. In good sun, plants can remain quite compact, often with the branches arranged in tiers looking as if they have been sprayed with color. In these conditions, plants often look like natural bonsais. In deeper shade, plants tend to be looser, with fewer blossoms and an open plant habit. Since Kurumes adapt easily to pruning, the Japanese use them in formal gardens less for their flower color than for their shape when trimmed into small oval rock-like forms, much like green Mexican beach pebbles. This creates the symbolism of rock or boulders where none is available in the garden. Pruning also permits Kurumes to be used as trimmed hedges or as topiary shapes as accents in more formal gardens. If I had the room, I would simply plant them where they would have plenty of room to assume their natural form.

Of course, the most spectacular aspect of Kurumes is their flowers. These plants probably cover themselves with color better than almost any other azalea group. When they are in full bloom, it is almost impossible to see green foliage on many Kurumes. If you tried to cover a plant with spray paint, you couldn't do a better job! Although many have small size flowers, there is plenty of diversity, from the tiny flower form of 'Twilight' to the larger flower forms such as 'Ho Oden'; from the split petal flowers of 'Koromo Shikibu' to the double and hose-in-hose flower forms. Their ability to flower from the cutting stage on gives Kurumes the advantage of giving a full display each spring.

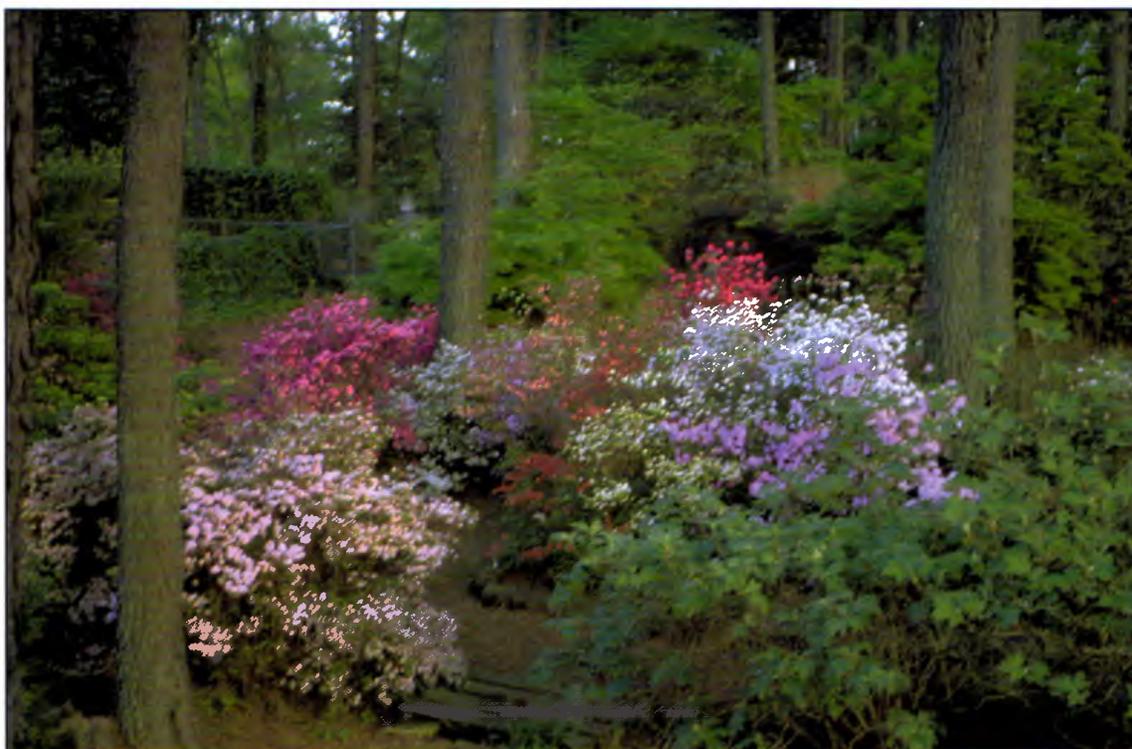
Since we are looking at foliage 51 weeks of the year, we should also consider the appeal of various leaf forms. Foliage can range from the soft and fuzzy (sticky) leaf of 'Koromo Shikibu' to the small shiny ovate leaves (unfortunately most attractive to white fly) of 'Coral Bells'. The vast majority fall somewhere between, with a moderate sized, glossy or flat leaf fully clothing the plant. It is this distinctive foliage that makes Kurumes so easy to shear when needed or to trim into formal shapes.

Kurumes offer us another bonus—ease of propagation. Because they are among the first to bloom, Kurumes get a head start on seasonal growth; this also makes good cutting wood available early in the propagation season. Usually rooting hormone is not necessary if the technique is sanitary and the cuttings are taken when the new growth material will snap cleanly. Hardening off the cuttings is easy, considering how early they can be taken. As long as they are protected from wide temperature swings, Kurumes will have no problem in devel-

opment. Normal spraying will discourage insect pests, lace bug in sunny areas being the primary problem. The only real threat to their survival is having the bark split during the coldest temperatures. Like other azaleas, there are a few such as 'Ward's Ruby' or 'Ruby Glow' that seem to be more tender than others. Just take a few extra cuttings to protect yourself! In summary, Kurumes are our "Harbingers of Spring." They provide among azaleas our first big show of color, often making it difficult for us to appreciate later blooming azaleas. Indeed,

in Atlanta most people consider azaleas finished when the Kurumes fade, forgetting that there are six more weeks to enjoy the Glenn Dales, Linwoods, Back Acres, Robin Hills, Satsukis, etc....Kurumes are only the beginning, but what a way to start!

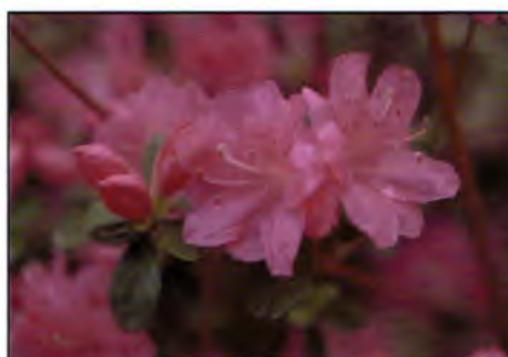
Dr. Joe Coleman is by profession a dentist, in practice for twenty-seven years in the Stone Mountain area. By passion, he is an azalea collector (for the past twenty years) as well as a member of the Azalea Society of America almost since its inception.



Nuccio hybrid landscape



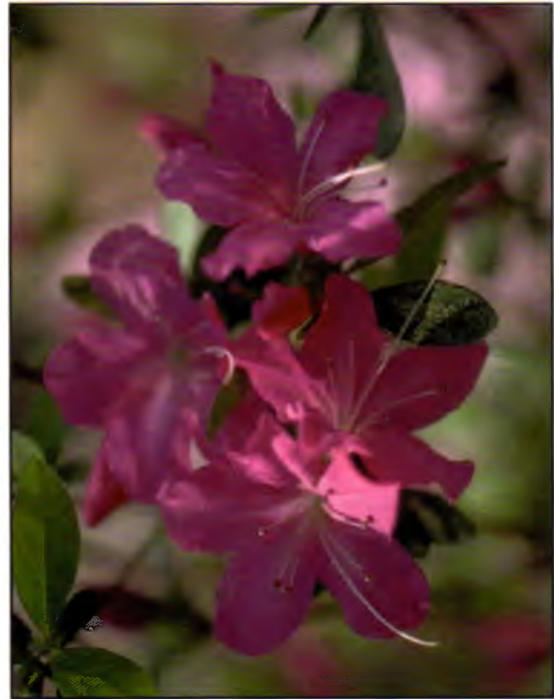
McDonald 'Blushing Angel'



'Rosy Morn'



'Wakaebisu'



'Maya Fujin'



'Nuccio's Jewel Box'



'Painted Lady'



'Nuccio's Lilac Lady'



'Aratama'

Photographs by the author □

IDENTIFYING THE NATIVE AZALEAS—

Part II

An Identification Key to the Species of *Rhododendron*
sect. *Pentanthera* in North America Using Floral, Fruit
and Vegetative Characters

Dr. Kathleen A. Kron

Winston-Salem, NC

Identifying the native azaleas in their habitat usually requires a hand lens or magnifying glass. It also helps to look at several flowers and flowering stems on the same plant. Natural variation among individuals and populations can make positive identification challenging at times, but in general the following key should be a useful guide to identification. Comparison of closely related species can also be helpful in identification. Some comparison tables (Kron, 1993) have been included at the end of the key to help with identification.

- 1a. Flowers appearing before or with the leaves (at least some of the leaves still folded or the vegetative bud scales still present) 2
- 1b. Flowers appearing after the leaves have expanded (essentially all of the leaves unfolded, and the vegetative bud scales absent) 11
 - 2a. Upper corolla lobe with contrasting blotch often appearing as a darker-colored area at the base of the upper corolla lobe 3
 - 2b. Upper corolla lobe the same color as the other lobes, without a visible contrasting or darker-colored blotch 7
- 3a. Corolla limb nearly as broad as the tube is long, the tube abruptly expanding into the limb; flowers yellow to orange, or red 4
- 3b. Corolla limb shorter than the length of the tube, the tube gradually expanding into the limb; flowers white or yellow to orange 5
 - 4a. Floral bud scales with glandular edges, the outer surface smooth or nearly without hairs; corolla tube densely covered with multicellular glandular hairs *R. calendulaceum* (Flame azalea)
 - 4b. Floral bud scales with ciliate edges, the outer surface smooth to sparsely covered with unicellular hairs; corolla tube covered with multicellular eglandular hairs, occasionally very weakly glandular *R. flammeum* (Oconee azalea)
- 5a. Flowers white, with a contrasting yellow blotch on the upper corolla lobe 6
- 5b. Flowers yellow to orange, sometimes with dark pink or red colors as well; floral bud-scale edges glandular *R. austrinum* (Florida azalea)
 - 6a. Fruits densely covered with unicellular hairs, floral bud scales smooth or only slightly covered with unicellular hairs, the edges ciliate *R. alabamense* (Alabama azalea)
 - 6b. Fruits sparsely covered with unicellular hairs or smooth; floral bud scales sparsely to densely covered with unicellular hairs, the edges ciliate or with glands and cilia mixed or with only glands *R. occidentale* (Western azalea)
- 7a. Multicellular glandular hairs forming lines that continue along the outer surface of the corolla lobes; flowers white, the length of the tube equal to or longer than the distance that the stamens are exerted beyond the corolla; plants low-growing and strongly rhizomatous *R. atlanticum* (Coastal azalea, Dwarf azalea)
- 7b. Multicellular glandular or eglandular hairs scattered on the outer surface of the corolla tube, not forming distinct lines that continue up the corolla lobes; flowers pink to white, the corolla tube shorter than the distance that the stamens are exerted beyond the corolla; plants usually tall and not strongly rhizomatous 8

- 8a. Corolla covered with multicellular eglandular hairs; flowers pink; floral bud scales smooth, occasionally moderately covered with unicellular hairs; leaves smooth or nearly so *R. periclymenoides* (Piedmont azalea, Pinxter flower)
- 8b. Corolla covered with multicellular glandular hairs; flowers pink or pink and white; floral bud scales smooth to densely covered with unicellular hairs 9
- 9a. Floral bud scales smooth; pedicels and sepal edges usually eglandular with the pedicels often lacking unicellular hairs or only sparsely covered with them; leaves smooth or only sparsely covered with unicellular hairs *R. periclymenoides* (Piedmont azalea, Pinxter flower)
- 9b. Floral bud scales densely covered with unicellular hairs; pedicels and sepal edges eglandular or glandular, pedicels usually with dense unicellular hairs; outer surface of leaves moderately to densely covered with unicellular hairs 10
- 10a. Corolla tube narrow and somewhat abruptly expanding into the lobes; pedicels usually eglandular and relatively short, occasionally glandular; leaves inconspicuously ciliate, the cilia pointing toward the apex of the leaf; fruits densely covered with unicellular hairs *R. canescens* (Sweet azalea, Wild azalea)
- 10b. Corolla tube broader, and gradually expanding into the limb; pedicels usually glandular and relatively long; leaves conspicuously ciliate, the cilia pointing away from the margin of the leaf, fruits smooth or nearly so *R. prinophyllum* (early azalea, election pink, roshell azalea)
- 11a. Stems smooth; outer surface of leaves smooth or nearly so 12
- 11b. Stems with multicellular hairs (glandular or eglandular) and/or unicellular hairs 13
- 12a. Flowers deep yellow to red; fruits lacking multicellular glandular hairs *R. prunifolium* (Plumleaf azalea)
- 12b. Flowers white with dark pink to red filaments and style; fruits covered with multicellular glandular hairs *R. arborescens* (Smooth azalea, Sweet azalea)
- 13a. Flowers yellow to orange and red, with a blotch or darker-colored spot on the upper corolla lobe, the tube abruptly expanding into the limb; floral bud-scale edges glandular, the outer surface smooth *R. cumberlandense* (Cumberland azalea)
- 13b. Flowers white, the style and filaments white or greenish-white; upper corolla lobe the same color as the rest of the lobes, without a blotch (flowers occasionally pink, but still lacking a blotch on the upper corolla lobe), the tube gradually expanding into the lobes; floral bud-scale edges usually ciliate, occasionally with glands and unicellular hairs mixed along the edges, the outer surface smooth to densely unicellular pubescent *R. viscosum* (Clammy azalea, Swamp azalea).

Table 1. Distinguishing Characters of *Rhododendron prinophyllum*, *R. periclymenoides*, and *R. canescens*

Species	Hairs on the Pedicel and Sepal Edges	Outer Surface of Floral Bud Scales	Outer Surface of Corolla	Fruit Hairs
<i>prinophyllum</i>	glandular, rarely eglandular	densely covered with unicellular hairs	densely covered with unicellular and glandular hairs	glandular
<i>periclymenoides</i>	eglandular, rarely glandular	smooth to sparsely covered with unicellular hairs	sparsely covered with unicellular and eglandular hairs occasionally with glandular hairs	eglandular
<i>canescens</i>	eglandular, occasionally glandular	densely covered with unicellular hairs	densely covered with unicellular and glandular hairs	eglandular, occasionally glandular

Table 2. Distinguishing Characters of *Rhododendron calendulaceum* and *R. cumberlandense*

Taxon	Flowering	Hairs on the Pedicel	Sepal edges	Lower leaf surface
<i>calendulaceum</i>	before or with the expansion of the leaves	glandular to eglandular	glandular to eglandular	rarely if ever covered with a whitish or bluish waxy layer
<i>cumberlandense</i>	after the leaves have expanded	eglandular, rarely glandular (never with <u>both</u> the pedicel and sepal edges glandular)	eglandular rarely glandular	often covered with a whitish or bluish waxy layer

Literature Cited

Kron, K. A. 1993. A revision of *Rhododendron* section *Pentanthera*. Edinburgh Journal of Botany 50: 249-364.

Dr. Kron's Ph.D. dissertation was a revision of the Rhododendron sect. Pentanthera, She also published a revision of the rest of the deciduous azaleas with W. S. Judd. She's currently working on the evolutionary relationships among the major groups of Rhododendrons using DNA sequence data in the Department of Biology at Wake Forest University.

Exbury Gardens Visitor Information

Exbury Gardens, highlighted in the article "Mr. Lionel's Azaleas," (**THE AZALEAN**, March 1997) is a wonderful place to visit if you are planning a trip to England. It is a showplace not to be missed by lovers of fine azaleas or those interested in the heritage of today's azaleas and rhododendrons. The Gardens are open to the public daily from March 1 - November 2, 10 AM - 5:30 PM (or dusk if earlier). Admission prices range from approximately \$7 (£3.30) from 7 March - mid April and again from mid-June to mid-July, to approximately \$10 (£4.80) during the peak of azalea season, mid-April to mid-June.

Exbury Gardens is located in the New Forest, near Beaulieu, twenty minutes' drive south from M27 junction 2. Discounts are available for senior citizens and are even greater on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Children under 10 are admitted free; children over 10 pay a reduced rate. Your visit will be well worth the effort.

For further information, contact the Gardens directly:

24-hour information line: 011-44-1703-899422;
 General inquiries: 011-44-1703-891203,
 Mailing address:
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 Exbury
 Southampton S0451AZ
 UNITED KINGDOM

Kathleen Kuehn, *Lucernimines*, Pa ☐

Dr. Kathleen A. Kron, Dept. of Biology, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC 27109-7325. ☐

Where Can I Find That Azalea?

Native Azalea Collector trying to find a double *R. viscosum*, and also strap-petal forms of *R. viscosum*, *R. austrinum*, and *R. periclymenoides*. Any information will help.

Allen Cantrell
 2586 Hwy. 11 West
 Chesnee, S.C. 29323

Phone: (864)461-7146

Personal Experiences in Hybridizing Azaleas

Fred Sorg

Westminister, SC

About 50 years ago I started hybridizing day lilies and iris and I thought, with the plants I had to work with, I had some beautiful day lilies and iris—nothing to compare with what we have today but still beautiful.

My next hybridizing experience was with rhododendrons and out of 15,000 seedlings and seven and one-half years nothing was worth keeping. So I started on azaleas in 1975. I decided to use the prettiest azaleas one could find for stock plants. I ordered Robin Hills, Linwood Hardies and anything else that he had (Frank White, in the Washington, DC area). I started with these plants along with the James Harris hybrids. My slide presentation will show you some of the results of these crosses. Each year since 1975 I have used different azaleas for crosses and in 1978 I found an azalea in Florida, named 'Duchess of Cypress'. I used this azalea to cross with 'Parfait' and other Harris hybrids. As a result I have a whole new series of azaleas that I call Apple Blossom Azaleas. They are characterized by a profusion of small blooms in bi-colors and plain colors on low-growing plants (2' to 3' in ten years). They are very good landscape plants.

A few thoughts about growing azaleas from seed: If you have ever grown anything from seed, you can grow azaleas from seed. Take a seed pod from any azalea in September or October. Dry the seed pod. After the seed pod is thoroughly dried, get a large piece of white paper and a colander, one with a screen. Put your seed pod in colander and mash with a large spoon over the sheet of white paper. I just put the seed in a small envelope and mark the outside with the cross I made or write "open pollinated."

I like to use a sterile growing medium and put about 1/4" of screened sphagnum moss on top and just sprinkle the seed on the sphagnum moss. As to the container, I like to use clay pots. If pots have been used, soak in a Clorox solution for several days and rinse thoroughly. For a growing medium I use fine composted pine bark. Soak medium thoroughly for several days before planting.

Stash seed container in a clear plastic bag and tie so no moisture can escape. Place a seed container under regular fluorescent lights, at least 16 hours a day. When seedlings are 1/4" high open the top of the plastic bag each day, for about a week. Then just roll plastic bags down around the top of the pot. Leave as dry as possible to prevent damp off. If water is needed, pour water into the plastic tube, never water the plants directly.

When plants are one inch tall, transplant into four-inch pots, using the same growing medium as in the seed flat. After plants are a month old fertilize

with a liquid fertilizer (one teaspoon to a gallon of water). After the first year, plant into gallon pots.

If You Would Like To Try Your Hand At Hybridizing

First you have to decide what color flowers, low or tall shrub, size of the bloom and whether double or single flowers. Whatever you are looking for in an azalea, try to find two plants that are most like what you want. Then, cross-pollinate these plants. I like to take them into the greenhouse and do the pollinating there. This keeps the pollen bees from stealing the pollen and gives you a better chance to pollinate. No wind, water or other things that may cause the pollen not to take. Use small white tags to tag the blooms you pollinated. On the tag write the name of the one being pollinated x the one you use the pollen from. I like to take one small top branch with three or four blooms; this way you're sure to get one or two seed pods. After pollination pull the pollen sacs from the bloom you just pollinated. Some people like to tie small brown paper bags over the blooms to keep the bees off. I have never gone to this much trouble. I am not a good record keeper and had a lot of trouble with the plastic tags. The birds will pull out the plastic tags or the water will fade the writing off. A few years ago I started using aluminum tags and have had good luck with them.

Just a note here: when transplanting seedlings, only one seedling to a pot! I have 20-year-old plants with two or three plants to a pot, because the seedlings are so small it's very easy to put more than one to a four-inch pot when transplanting. □

NATIVE COMPANION PLANTS

George Sanko
Covington, GA

UNDER AND AROUND THE SKIRTS OF THE NATIVE AZALEAS

1. Harper's Wild Ginger—*Hexastylis speciosa*
2. Shuttleworth's Wild Ginger—*Hexastylis shuttleworthii*
3. Callaway Wild Ginger—*Hexastylis shuttleworthii* var. *harperi*
4. Canadian Wild Ginger—*Asarum canadense*
5. White Milkweed—*Asclepias variegata*
6. Allegheny Spurge—*Pachysandra procumbens*
7. Louisiana Bluestar—*Amsonia ludoviciana*
8. Arkansas Bluestar—*Amsonia hubrechtii*
9. Sword-leaf Phlox—*Phlox buckleyi*
10. Bleeding Heart—*Dicentra eximia*
11. Dutchman's Breeches—*Dicentra cucullaria*
12. Celandine Poppy—*Stylophorum diphyllum*
13. Black Cohosh—*Cimicifuga racemosa*
14. Shooting Star—*Dodecatheon meadia*
15. Crested Iris—*Iris cristata*
16. Copper Iris—*Iris fulva*
17. Dixie Iris—*Iris hexagona*
18. Soapwort Gentian—*Gentiana saponaria*
19. Witch-Alder—*Fothergilla gardenii*
20. Sessile Bellwort—*Uvularia sessilifolia*
21. Perfoliate Bellwort—*Uvularia perfoliata*
22. Large-flowered Bellwort—*Uvularia grandiflora*
23. Wild Columbine—*Aquilegia canadensis*
24. Jacob's Ladder—*Polemonium reptans*
25. Twin Leaf—*Jeffersonia diphylla*

blue, gray, purple and bicolor junipers. For spring interest, we might add the heaths and heathers, although they aren't reliably hardy in this area. The evergreen *Leucothoe fontanesiana*, a selected form, 'Girard's Rainbow', will give you colorful foliage for winter arrangements. I wish *Pieris japonica* (or *andromeda*) had a common name such as "lilac," so that people unfamiliar with scientific plant names would know what to ask for. The word "Japonica" is used with a diversity of plants. Sometimes it's used as a complete name. "I'd like a Japonica shrub." Actually, the word means "from Japan." If I were to give this plant a common name, I'd call it the "Waterfall Shrub." The white sprays of bloom come in very early spring. They resemble miniature waterfalls, against a background of shiny, narrow-leaved evergreen foliage. Everybody needs a *Pieris japonica*.

For contrast in foliage pattern and size, two low-growing evergreen members of the heath family deserve to be better known. They are the Box Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia brachycera*) and Sand-Myrtle (*Leiophyllum buxifolium*). They are useful as ground covers or small accent shrubs.

The Tree-Peony (*Paeonia suffruticosa*) blooms with the mid-season azaleas and adds contrast in shape and size of bloom and foliage pattern. Despite the name, this plant isn't a tree, but is so-called because the stems are woody. The foliage pattern also differs from the better known peony in that it is looser and the leaves resemble leaves of some trees. The single or double flowers of the Tree-Peony are magnificent. The singles are shaped like a huge (eight to ten inch) poppy, with serrated edges, and flakes of golden pollen dusting the center. Colors are white and shades of pink and red. Tree-Peonies are hardy in this area. Although they aren't widely planted in home gardens, there are some displays in public gardens, one of which is the azalea garden at Landon School in Bethesda, Maryland.

Small trees are useful as a contrast in size. Use them sparingly, placed at intervals for accent points. The emphasis here is on "small." Stay far, far away from maples. Their roots are shallow and will rob the azaleas of food and moisture. Keep azaleas outside the "drip line" of other trees. Dogwood is the

Cultural Notes

Good Companions

Ruth Harrington

Reprinted from the July 1997 issue of *The Azalea Clipper*, the newsletter of the Northern Virginia Chapter.

When compatible plants are included in azalea plantings, the effect can be even more exciting than an exclusive azalea collection. Some of these plants may have similar qualities which blend well, but the contrasting plants are even more interesting. Contrast is a rule of both nature and art—light and dark, hot and cold, bright and dull, rough and smooth, or the Oriental Yin and Yang.

Plants are complementary to azaleas by foliage patterns and colors, size, growth habits, different blooming times, or patterns of bloom. Plants with interesting foliage patterns and/or colors include *Pieris japonica*, Burford Holly (preferably the dwarf form), Box Huckleberry, Sand Myrtle and the

classic azalea companion, but red-bud and any small, upright evergreens are also good.

Spring blooming bulbs make a sparkling setting for the main attraction of azaleas. They can be planted fairly close if you plant them when the azaleas are small. Once established, bulb roots won't interfere with azalea roots because they go deep. The "little bulbs," such as "Glory of the Snow" (*Chionodoxa*), "Spanish Squill" (*Scilla campanulata*), Snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*) are real treasures. Start with a few and in a few years you'll have drifts of them. These little gems scatter their prolific seeds which grow into blooming-size bulbs in a few years. *Chionodoxa* is a true blue color, not found in azaleas, and will eventually colonize into blue pools around them. The Squills are a little later and come in a lavender blue, pink and white.

If you use ground covers with azaleas, do so with care. Don't allow them to intrude past the drip line of the plant. Be especially careful with *Ajuga*. It can quickly become rampant and seed will either blow or be carried to the middle of the lawn where it will choke out grass. Keep in mind the common name for *Ajuga*: "bugleweed."

The above discussion just skims the surface of compatible plants. For further reading, I recommend some of the handbooks published by the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens.

This is another article prepared by Ruth Harrington for publication in The Azalea Clipper. Ruth hybridized two beautiful azaleas, 'Green Goddess' and 'Highlander'. She also wrote for the Journal Newspapers. This article was prepared in 1987. Ruth Harrington died in 1989. □

PRIZE FOR BEST ARTICLE IN THE AZALEAN—1996

Dr. Kathleen A. Kron and James O. Thornton

In 1989, the Board of Governors authorized the editor of **THE AZALEAN** to establish an annual prize for the best article to appear in **THE AZALEAN**. The concept was to acquire through donations, a fund which when invested would provide an annual prize for the best article published in **THE AZALEAN**. Funds were donated by the following chapters to establish the "CHAPTER'S PRIZE":

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

As stated in the September 1990 issue, the best article each year will be selected by a poll of the membership. The prize will be announced and awarded at the Annual Meeting of the Society.

The prize for the best article in **THE AZALEAN** for 1996 was awarded at the annual meeting in Atlanta. In 1996 there was a tie for the honor which was shared by **Dr. Kathleen A. Kron** for her article "Identifying the Native Azaleas" which appeared in the December 1996 issue and by **Jim Thornton** for his article "Fred Galle" which appeared in the June 1996 issue. Congratulations!

The prize has been awarded since 1990. The recipients to date have been:

1995 Richard T. West and William C. Miller III
"The Ten Oaks Azaleas and the Glenn Dale Distribution Project"
September 1995 issue of **THE AZALEAN**.

1994 Steve Brainerd
"Designing With Azaleas"
December 1994 issue

1993 Robert T. Stelloh
"George Harding Azalea Garden-A Progress Report"
December 1993 issue

1992 Richard T. West
"Easy Propagation of Azaleas at Home"
December 1992 issue

1991 Jane Newman
"In Praise of the Greenwoods on the East Coast"
December 1991 issue

1990 Ajit Thakur
"The Enchanting Satsuki"
March 1990 issue □

Native Azaleas on Roan Mountain, Tennessee

J. Raymond Goza

Lilburn, Georgia

My program this evening will be a slide tour of Roan and Yellow Mountain area of the Southern Appalachian Mountains. This area is located along the Appalachian Trail and boundaries of Tennessee and North Carolina.

Before I start the slides I would like to tell you how we—Ann and I—became familiar with Roan. About 1973 we read an article in the Atlanta paper about the natural native rhododendron gardens on the crest of Roan Mountain. That June we traveled to Roan with our two young children in a pick-up truck camper. The Catawba rhodies were beautiful. I recall seeing only one or two “leggy” azalea (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*) along the roadside as we entered the Rhodie Gardens.

We were told by a Forest Service Ranger that it was permissible for self-contained camper vehicles to stay the night in the large parking lot near the Gardens. (I doubt this is permissible now.) This would be a night my family will never forget. As we say in the south, “It come up a cloud.” At 6,300 feet we were in the middle of the largest lightning storm of our lives. We survived.

A few years later we received some literature in the mail from the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy. We joined this group and later received more information about the annual conference and guided hikes to Grassy Ridge or Yellow Mountain, describing the abundance of Rhodies and *R. calendulaceum*. We have attended about six conferences.

The Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy is a non-profit, charitable organization founded in 1974 to preserve critical areas of the Southern Appalachian region for public benefit.

The Grassy Ridge hikers meet at Carvers Gap, located between Roan Mountain, TN and Bakersville, NC. The time is around 8:00AM. Some years heavy fog is present at this time of day. By 10:00AM the fog begins to clear. By 12:00 noon, clear skies. The distance to Grassy Ridge is about 2.5 miles. Five miles round trip. Along the way our hike leader, Ed Schell, botanizes every grass, weed and moss. I think he now recognizes me as the nut who keeps his head and camera in the *calendulaceum*. We follow the Appalachian Trail north. The bald mountain views are magnificent. Flame azaleas here, there, everywhere. Individual plants—small groups—large flaming swarms. Colors: pale yellow—golden yellow—orange to red. No protection from the wind or sun. They are loaded with flowers.

A lot of these slides show dead trees. Ann always asks —“Raymond, why do you take pictures of dead trees?” Her idea of a good photo is a beautiful azalea with a Wal-Mart store as background.

As we walk, the quietness is deafening. Entering the large acreage of Catawbas on Grassy Ridge the trail goes through and under the Rhodies.



The roar of bumble bees; buzzing and pollinating. The heavy fragrance of the Catawbas permeates the mountain. This is reason enough to keep me returning.

As we return to Carvers Gap we stop to admire the goats and their guard dogs, trucked in from Oklahoma each spring to keep the balds clear of blackberry vines. It is 3:00PM back at the car. Five miles of walking up hills and down hills without seeing any "facilities" public or private—not even a Wal-Mart!



Raymond Goza has been employed by the Norfolk Southern Railway Company as a Morse Telegrapher and Communications Technician. He is a FAA certified pilot. He is the owner of Goza Nursery. Ray is also a

member of the Azalea Society, of America, the American Rhododendron Society, International Plant Propagators Society, Mens Garden Club of America and the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy.

Photographs by the author □

NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER

Joe Klimavicz, *President*

The April 1997 meeting took place on April 27, 1997 at Dave and Sharon Raden's home. Before the meeting the guests were able to tour the gardens, which are landscaped around the house down to the strong-flowing Accotink Creek. The scene is very well secluded by woods and parkland. There were many beautiful variations of azaleas and rhododendrons to view. It was indeed very delightful that the Radens would share their gardens with us.

The meeting consisted of sharing newer cuttings by members for "show and tell" of their favorite plants. This turned out to be very interesting, as many different selections were brought by the members present. It is clear that people have variations in taste, and that many varieties of azaleas are candidates for being included in someone's favorite selections.

The Chapter is going to host the 1998 ASA Convention. I have been talking about this possibility for some time, but now that it is a reality, we all have a lot of work to do in the next year. I view this as a great opportunity; unfortunately we are about a year behind in the planning according to the folks that planned the Atlanta convention.

I would like to summarize where we are in the convention planning. On May 17, 1997, several members met to begin organizing. We decided on the following committees and chairs:

Plants: Dave Raden
 Transportation: Jack Krogmann
 Registration: Dave and Virginia Banks
 Hotel: Dan Kraybill
 Tours: Don Hyatt
 Speakers: Bruno Kaelin
 Publicity: Phil Louer

We further decided that the convention would occur April 30-May 3, 1998. We agreed on an agenda and hotel requirements. The hotel requirements are being sent to a large number of hotels in Northern Virginia and I hope that by our meeting on July 13, 1997, we will have selected a hotel. Then the detailed planning can proceed. We will have periodic convention meetings to assess our progress against schedule. I know the committee chairs will be asking for the support of each Chapter member.

Oconee Chapter

Earl Hester, *President*

The Oconee Chapter of the Azalea Society of America met March 26, 1997, at the first Baptist Church of Conyers. President Earl Hester called the meeting to order with 13 members present.

Avis Aronovitz, President of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, asked our chapter to help find an azalea to name for Ralph Bullard. A suggestion was made by Ray Goza that several azaleas be submitted and be judged by a panel. Please contact an Oconee Chapter officer for ideas or specimens.

The treasurer's report was given, noting that convention registration money was coming in but a lot will be going out to pay bills.

Jim Thornton gave an update on the coming ASA convention and final last minute organization was conducted.

Future plans for an ASA and ARS combined meeting for a nature symposium in Tennessee were announced. (The date is to be decided later.) There was a discussion about moving our meeting place to different areas to see if we could accommodate our members.

Earl Hester was our first speaker and his subject was "Do's and Don't's of Azaleas—Things a Commercial Dealer Knows." After an intermission, Tom Anderson showed slides and shared his experiences in Viet Nam.

At the end of the meeting, members bought azaleas donated by Ben Reid and Earl Hester. Thirty-nine dollars went into the treasury!

TRI-STATE CHAPTER

Greg Wedding, President

On May 14, 1997, Stephen Schroeder, local azalea grower and National Director, donated 11 azaleas to the University of Evansville on behalf of the Tri-State Chapter.

The variety named 'Purple Pride' is one of 43 named hybrids developed by the late Dr. Henry R. Schroeder and his sons David and Stephen.

The azaleas are planted at the campus monument dedicated to the school's basketball team and staff who perished in a December 13, 1977 airplane crash. Steve named this azalea 'Purple Pride' in honor of the team. Purple is the school color and 'Purple Pride' is a slogan used by the University.

Steve graciously promised the University that he would replace free of charge any azalea during his lifetime. A sign bearing the name 'Purple Pride' and the donor Tri-State Chapter of the Azalea Society of America will be placed at the memorial next to the azaleas.



Chapter Achievement

Following is a list of Chapter membership numbers as of August 14, 1997

	Members	
	Total	New
Ben Morrison	34	5
Brookside Gardens	127	18
Dallas	49	5
Louisiana	34	3
Northern Virginia	63	5
Oconee	82	9
Richmond Virginia	39	4
Tri-State	23	1

NEW MEMBERS

AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Mr. John A. Burns, Jr.
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1811 19th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20009

Mr. & Mrs. J. R. Collier
635 Independence Drive
Jacksonville, NC 28546
PHONE: (910) 346-6235

Flowerwood Nursery, Inc.
c/o Ms. Aimee Cobb
P. O. Box 665
Loxley, AL 36551
PHONE: (334) 964-5122

Mr. William A. Kautzmann
P. O. Box 645
Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538

Mr. Stephen Krebs
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Ms. Alva Oliver
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Smithsonian Institution
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