



# The Azalean

The Newsletter of the Azalea Society of America

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## ORGANIZING NEW CHAPTERS

By Jerry Goodman  
President, Robert D. Gartrell Chapter,  
North Caldwell, New Jersey

Inspiration is the name of the game. After last spring's trip to Washington, when we met enthusiastic members of the Azalea Society, I knew that the need existed in our area to offer azalea lovers a N.J. chapter.

Initially, I contacted the Azalea Society to obtain information about forming a chapter. It seems I was psychic. Alice Holland wrote that they had just discussed the need for a chapter in our area. Two years ago Emil Deckert tried to get me to form a chapter but I felt the time was not right. Needless to say, I received the utmost cooperation from anybody I contacted.

In order to reach people in the area, I sent a copy of "Aims of the Azalea Society" to the newspapers and the local cable TV station within a radius of 50 miles. I also published a meeting date in the papers and all the local libraries, and a notice that a new chapter was being formed.

I made personal contacts with friends who had visited my garden over the years, mailing them a copy of the "Aims."

Fourteen people showed up at my home the night of our initial meeting in March; we are now a group of 26.

The Chapter held a plant sale in my driveway in order to raise working funds. From the initial sale we have cleared over \$700 profit which will finance programs, mailing and meeting expenses for the coming year.

We are looking forward to a productive year, offering educational programs to new azalea lovers, as well as detailed discussions for the connoisseurs.

## DECIDUOUS AZALEAS, PART II ASIATIC SPECIES

by Judson Hardy

Three deciduous azalea species from Asia have found their way into many American gardens. Not native to Asia but included in this article for sake of completeness is a species from the Black Sea region of Europe. At least a dozen other Asian species, subspecies and variants are described in the azalea literature, but are omitted from this article because they are rather difficult to grow and have few redeeming superior qualities. The four species to be described here are meritorious plants in their own right, but three are important also because they are genetically related to a number of U.S. deciduous species and, with our own wildings, have been combined to form the beautiful European large-flowered hybrid groups which enjoy mounting popularity in this country.

### The Species

**JAPONICUM:** This fine azalea is native to the main islands of Japan where its natural range is from coastal meadows to wooded mountain slopes up to 3000 ft. elevation. It is a stoutly branched shrub 5-6 ft. high, very hardy, and graced with flowers in clusters of 5 to 12 which bloom in the D.C. area early in May. Each flower has a short tube which flares out to a corolla 2-3" across. The color range is from flesh pink through luminous shades of yellow and orange to a very dark red. Highly adaptable to U.S. conditions, japonicum seedlings grown in quantity should, through selection, provide plants which have attractive flowers and are suited to almost any garden from coastal New England to Atlanta, and possibly to inland zones east of the Mississippi. Naturally it flourishes in that Rhododendron heaven, the Pacific northwest. With slightly fragrant flowers, this species and its hybrids are worthy of trial wherever conditions permit.

**MOLLE:** This species closely resembles its Japanese relative but appears to be less adaptable and has a color range limited pretty

Deciduous Azaleas, Part II: Asiatic Species (continued)

much to shades of yellow. Its natural habitat is wooded slopes of eastern and central China. It is often confused with japonicum but the consensus among azalea students is that the latter is much to be preferred because of its range and clarity of color, its hardiness, and its adaptability to American gardens.

**FLAVUM:** The only deciduous azalea from Europe, this species is native to the Black Sea region, extending into Lithuania and Poland. It is dense and tall, up to 10 ft., and bears flowers 2-2½" wide in clusters of 5-10, slightly fragrant, in various shades of yellow. The species tends to dwindle with age in U.S. gardens and is generally an unsatisfactory performer compared to our native species and japonicum. Like its Asiatic counterparts listed above, it crosses readily with several of our own natives.

**SCHLIPPENBACHII:** This lovely, very hardy, but temperamental species is native to Korea and Manchuria. It is characterized by large, distinctively lobed leaves in clusters of 5 at the tips of twigs and branches. The typical form is dense and tall, up to 10 ft., but low and medium forms are thought to be available. Flowers are early and large, in clear shades of white to pink. The deep pink form with spotted throat is one of the loveliest azaleas extant. Many growers, including the author, have found "schlippy" rather difficult to bring into flower, but wherever it can be grown successfully it is a magnificent plant. According to Lee, its inherent beauty is such that few hybridizers have thought it worth the effort to tinker with its chromosomes.

Hybrid Groups

In recent decades the large-flowered European hybrid deciduous azaleas have gained considerable favor in the eastern seaboard states and the Pacific Northwest. A number of American hybridizers are now working with these plants to improve their adaptability to climates in the more southerly states either by the addition of more genetic material from our deep south natives, or the simpler method of selection from large groups of seedlings grown from European cultivars.

The main groups of the European deciduous hybrids are given below:

**GHEENT:** Beginning in the 1820s Belgian plantsmen crossed several U.S. species, probably calendulaceum, nudiflorum and viscosum with flavum, molle and japonicum. As a group the named forms, refined by generations of recrossing are surpassed in beauty by few of the later hybrid groups which are based fundamentally on the Ghents. Most of the clones are very hardy, and rather strong and tall growers, with medium to large flowers, some of which are scented. Some plantings below Philadelphia have a tendency to dwindle with age. Another disadvantage is that the foliage of some of the Ghent hybrids has a musky odor, sometimes offensive.

**MOLLIS:** This group of hybrids, developed in Holland, is now believed to consist mainly of selected forms of the species japonicum. They resemble and often are lumped together with the Ghent hybrid group or a related Belgian hybrid, rare in this country, under the name of Rustica Flora Plena (Lee). Under either name they share with the Ghents a preference for cool summers.

**KNAPHILL:** Beginning around 1870 an English nurseryman, Anthony Waterer, crossed selected Ghent and Molle (or japonicum) hybrids with calendulaceum, arborescens and possibly occidentale to form the superb Knaphill hybrids. Further recrossing and more infusions of American species and, throughout, rigid selection, brought the fine Knaphills we know today. Of almost every imaginable color, often fragrant, vigorous and adaptable, and very hardy, every true azalean should try them if his garden is reasonably cool in summer, although the Knaphills will tolerate more heat than the Ghent and Mollis hybrids. If the collector lives in the deeper South he should try his luck with seedlings, retaining those which prove to be the most heat-tolerant and mildew-resistant.

**EXBURY AND ILAM:** These excellent hybrid groups are refinements on the Knaphills and often merely duplicates. But they are in fashion and well worth trying.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Because Judson Hardy mentioned several times that powdery mildew is a particular frailty of deciduous azaleas, we asked him to expand on this problem. Here is what he wrote:

An imperfection in deciduous azaleas, particularly the European hybrid groups, needs discussion here because it is hardly mentioned in the standard reference books on azaleas familiar to this author.

Whether they are bred for a different climate than ours, or for some other reason, many of the best known Ghent-Exbury-etcetera clones developed abroad are in U.S. gardens highly susceptible to the fungus-caused disease, powdery mildew.

The only useful discussion of this problem found by the author appears in the Proceedings of the First Rhododendron Breeders Roundtable held at Pittsburg in 1973. After a brief discussion which suggests that most of the participants had given little thought to the subject, a list of cultivars (edited somewhat by the author) found to be "immune" to the disease and reflecting coordinated work of two well known plantsmen, Peter Girard and Orlando Pride, was printed. Having conducted similar observations over a period of several years, the author has added his own list of named European hybrid varieties found "highly resistant" to the disease.

Due to any number of variables which might affect these results the reader is urged not to consider these lists as infallible, but rather as guidelines to better understanding and control of the disease. Of considerable importance, however, is that all three observers found that crossing two resistant or immune varieties produced a large percentage of seedlings having the same traits.

And, of course, it should be remembered that spraying leaves and the ground beneath a plant with fungicides early in July and at monthly intervals thereafter will prevent appearance of the ugly greyish discoloration of foliage which we term "powdery mildew."

GIRARD-PRIDE LIST OF  
"immune" VARIETIES

Orangeade  
Mary Clare  
J.J. Jennings  
Annabelle  
Gallipoli  
Klondyke  
Double Ilam  
Ginger  
Royal Command  
Maori  
Spring Salvo  
Apple Blossom  
Pink Smokey  
Pink Peppermint  
Tang  
Brazil  
Toucan  
Red Sizzler  
Narcissaflora  
Krakatoa  
Homebush  
Canterbury  
June Bride  
Cream Puff  
Coral Queen  
Yellow Beauty  
Alice

JUDSON HARDY LIST OF  
"Highly resistant" VARIETIES

Balzac  
Brazil  
Copper Cloud  
Cecile  
Caprice  
Daviesii  
Fireball  
Flamingo  
Gallipoli  
Gibraltar  
Homebush  
Klondyke  
Narcissaflora  
Persil  
Peach Sunset  
Royal Lodge  
Pink Plush  
Pink Puff  
Spring Salvo  
Tang  
Toucan

COMMERCIAL AVAILABILITY OF DECIDUOUS SPECIES AND HYBRIDS

Azalea Acres Farm, 6419 Princess Garden Parkway,  
Lanham, MD 20801

The Bovees Nursery, 1737 S.W. Coronado Street  
Portland, OR 97219

Carlson's Gardens, Box 305, South Salem, NY 10590

The Cummins Garden, 22 Robertsville Rd., Marlboro, NJ 07746  
(An extensive list, including many of those on the  
Girard-Pride and Judson Hardy List. Will ship.)

Edwards Rhododendron Gardens, 6524 Elmdale Rd.,  
Alexandria, VA 22312

Greer Gardens, 1220 Goodpasture Island Rd.,  
Eurene, OR 97401

COMMERCIAL AVAILABILITY OF DECIDUOUS SPECIES AND HYBRIDS (continued)

Island Gardens, 701 Goodpasture Island Rd.,  
Eugene, OR 97401

Marshy Point Nursery, Marshy Point Rd.,  
Chase, MD 21027

Thais Azalea Farm, 121 Lime Kiln Rd.,  
Fulton, MD 20759

BOARD OF GOVERNORS' MEETING

The BOG meeting on 13 May was held at George Harding's very special hilltop garden near Germantown, Md. When the Governors finally and reluctantly moved out of the garden, and into session, they accomplished the following:

- Granted the petitions of the Ben Morrison and the Robert D. Gartrell chapters for charter.
- Voted honorary membership in the Society for G. Albert Reid (the Linwood Hardys) and Robert Gartrell (the Robin Hills).
- Voted Frank White a special appreciation for his activism in expanding the Society.
- Agreed on modifications to the by-laws which later were adopted at the ASA's annual meeting.

At a subsequent meeting, 18 May, the BOG voted to grant a charter to the new Northern Virginia chapter, and elected a new slate of Society officers. They are:

Chairman of the Board:	Frank White
President:	Arthur Vance
Vice President:	Jerry Goodman
Secretary:	Alice Holland
Treasurer:	Bill Parsons

ASA ANNUAL MEETING

The encouraging growth of the ASA was particularized at the annual meeting of the Society on 18 May in Bethesda, Md., by the presentation of charters to five chapters: Brookside Gardens (the original chapter), Richmond (Va.), Ben Morrison (Md.), Robert D. Gartrell (NJ), and Northern Virginia.

Treasurer Bill Parsons presented a proposal for three changes in the by-laws, one of which was to bring the by-laws into conformity with IRS requirements and thus to preserve the Society's tax-exempt status. All changes passed by voice vote. (Gifts to the Society are tax-deductible. Dues are not. Chapters may now apply for tax-exempt status.)

ASA ANNUAL MEETING(continued)

Ryon Page presented the slate prepared by the nominating committee to fill vacancies on the Board of Governors. The names were:

William (Buck) Claggett  
George Harding  
Alice Holland  
Jerry Goodman  
Frank White

The slate was elected unanimously.

PUBLICITY FOR NEW CULTIVARS

Not many members have achieved the sophistication of being able to tip off the Massachusetts Horticultural Society about noteworthy new cultivars, but we find it encouraging to learn that Horticulture, the Society's excellent periodical, is about to introduce profiles of worthy new cultivars (of all garden plants, not just azaleas) as a regular magazine feature. Now Horticulture has written to us, asking for assistance. What it wants is data about new azaleas which have been grown long enough to assure their superior nature. What characteristics make them unusual and noteworthy?

The fact is that we too would like to know about new and noteworthy azalea cultivars and companion plants. Moreover, we have a proprietary interest in wanting to know first. Therefore, send us the information and we'll relay it onward to Horticulture. (Address: John Shaffer, Editor, The Azalean, 3046 Newark St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20008).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: As I have just become interested in our native deciduous azaleas, you can be sure the (April) article by Judson Hardy was especially appreciated ... One question you or one of your readers could help me with are a listing, description and sources for the USDA Beltsville Dwarfs. I have obtained about four from Holly Hill Nursery, but am sure there are more.

A: Yes, there are more. This series of hybrids also is known as the Yerkes-Pryor Dwarfs, having been a product of the hybridizing done at the Beltsville Station of the USDA by two scientists, the late Guy Yerkes and Robert L. Pryor. When we questioned Mr. Pryor he pointed out that Lee (Frederick P.) described these hybrids accurately but not quite completely. Lee listed 19 varieties but missed number 20, My'o, a pink with a white-margined leaf.

The current assessment of the garden worth of these hybrids seems to be remarkably sketchy. Edwards Rhododendron Gardens (Alexandria, VA) said it phased them out because they weren't "thrifty." And Holly Heath Nursery (Wading River, NJ) listed 13 varieties in its 1978 catalogue, but only 2 in its current catalogue.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (continued)

But the Bovees Nursery (Portland, OR) is moving the other way. It notes in its January (1980) catalogue supplement that all Beltsville Dwarfs are sold out. When we asked Bovees whether this was because demand had increased or production decreased, Lucie Sorensen wrote in reply that there seems to be an increased interest in the Beltsville Dwarfs. Therefore Bovees is propagating them and will have a list of 2-year-olds available this fall. The August supplement to the Bovees catalogue (cost: \$1.00) will carry a complete list.

Meanwhile Brookside Gardens is growing 10 varieties in its demonstration plots.

One other comment about the Beltsville Dwarfs comes from Mrs. Roberta Adams, doyenne of the Ten Oaks Nursery (Clarksville, MD), which at one time propagated and grew more than 400 varieties of azalea. Mrs. Adams has an edging of the Beltsville Dwarf variety Little White Lie beside her patio. The plants are pruned yearly, but not very drastically. And after 30 or 35 years they still are only one foot high. Mrs. Adams says she likes Little White Lie particularly because the blooms, numerous as butterflies, are delicate and "in scale with the foliage." This delicacy is a characteristic of all the Beltsville Dwarfs.

(EDITORS NOTE: Elizabeth Cummins, The Cummins Garden, 22 Robertsville Road, Marlboro, NJ 07746, is trying to locate all the Beltsville Dwarf varieties. Please write to her directly if you have any information about their availability.)

AN OFFER FROM MR. PEAT MOSS

ASA chapters which are interested in a ready-made photographic/lecture package from the Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Information Bureau should consider this offer: eighty 35mm color slides plus an accompanying script by Elvin McDonald called "How to Improve your Gardening Game." Not geared especially to azaleas, the CSPMIB describes the 45-minute program as one that covers "all the basics of soil preparation for indoor and outdoor gardens ... plus tips on transplanting, vegetables and herbs, flowers for cutting, ideas for design and decoration and special projects such as topiary and espalier."

You supply the projector; otherwise the show is free.

We pass this offer on without recommendation. We haven't seen the show. But chapters can do so by writing to the CSPMIB, Suite 634, Empire State Building, New York, NY 10001.

DOUBLE DIGIT INFLATION

In the January 1980 issue we told you how to send for the RHS colour chart, for \$15. Then in the April issue we had to announce that the cost had ballooned to \$17.50. Now we learn that the cost has gone up to \$20.00. Better you should have bought in January. But if you didn't, and want the chart, the ordering mechanism is the same as before: Mr. Ed Parker, Registrar, American Rhododendron Society, Route 5, Box 35, Astoria, OR 97103.

SUPPLEMENT 3 TO ORIGINAL LIST

ASA MEMBERS

March 1980

Lell & Gerry Barnes  
206 Small Avenue,  
North Caldwell, New Jersey 07006

Mr. & Mrs. J. Edward Bennett  
1712 Collingwood Road  
Alexandria, Virginia 22308

Wayne Creager  
391 Warrenville Road  
Green Brook, New Jersey 08812

Robert Dombal  
14 Bristol Place  
Fairlawn, New Jersey 07410

Richard Dubois  
55 Evergreen Drive  
North Caldwell, New Jersey 07006

Newton W. Edwards  
6524 Elmdale Road  
Alexandria, Virginia 22312

David Graber  
2249 Shore Road  
Linwood, New Jersey 08221

Robert W. Macaulay  
91 Crescent Road  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4 1T7

John J. McFadden III  
16 Aberdeen Place  
Fairlawn, New Jersey 07410

Michael G. Misulia, Jr.  
Rt. 1 Box 234  
Frederick, Maryland 21701

James G. & Elizabeth Nunweiler  
903 Jackson Drive  
Williamsburg, Virginia 23185

Kenneth O'Dell  
Dello Nurseries, Inc.  
6374 Winchester Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38138

Mr. & Mrs. Walter A. Reggin  
11108 Lamplighter Lane  
Rockville, Maryland 20854

Gordon W. Severe  
10 Vera Lane (Oak Orchard)  
Millsboro, Delaware 19966

Russell G. Watson  
Robin Hill Farm Nursery  
15800 Croom Road  
Brandywine, Maryland 20613

David Wuebbens  
218 Lower Notch Road  
Little Falls, New Jersey 07424

April 1980

Mr. & Mrs. William Acton  
5506 Charlotte Drive  
Camp Springs, Maryland 20031

Mrs. Edith Adams  
Rt. #1 Box 150D  
Hague, Virginia 22469

Allan Anderson  
220 Mulberry Way  
Franklin Lakes, New Jersey 07417

Dr. & Mrs. William Apperson  
905 Pine Ridge Road  
Richmond, Virginia 23226

E.J. Aromi  
6112 St. Gallen Avenue  
Mobile, Alabama 36608

William Bedwell  
1618 Monument Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23220

(see over)

April 1980 (continued)

Mrs. Virginia A. Bourdreaux  
Coles Point, Virginia 22442

Mrs. Sandy Burke  
6207 85th Place  
New Carrollton, Maryland 20784

Mr. & Mrs. Francis F. Carr  
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Richmond, Virginia 23225

Sidney H. Deibert  
2707 Woodley Place  
Falls Church, Virginia 22046

Mrs. John R. Good  
3741 Darby Drive  
Midlothian, Virginia 23113

Mr. & Mrs. Terry L. Gordon  
Box 307 Mayfair Acres  
Milligan, Florida 32537

Ruth E. Harrington  
7208 Parkview Avenue  
Falls Church, Virginia 22042

Jim & Dale Harvison  
307 Lexington Drive  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

Dolores & Ronald Henschell  
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Mr. & Mrs. Bill G. Hendon  
RFD 1, Box 120, Ray's Point,  
St. Michaels, Maryland 21663

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph C. Hoffman  
2703 Fawn Lane  
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Mr. & Mrs. Robert D. Huse  
10408 Greenacres Drive  
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Mr. & Mrs. Robert Lynch  
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Mrs. Robert L. Mayer  
6204 85th Place  
New Carrollton, Maryland 20784

Mr. & Mrs. Douglas McDaniel  
6213 85th Place  
New Carrollton, Maryland 20784

Mrs. John Philips  
4810 Monumental Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23226

John J. Rountree  
6514 Elmhirst Drive  
Falls Church, Virginia 22043

Mrs. Janet Rueger  
607 Maple Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23226

David Sauer  
14201 Ramblewood Drive  
Chester, Virginia 23831

Mrs. Brenda Stanley  
7600 Hillside Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23229

Dr. & Mrs. Joseph Svoboda  
6016 St. Andrews Lane  
Richmond, Virginia 23226

Ron & Vi Turley  
16121 Malcolm Drive  
Laurel, Maryland 20810

Howard A. Van Vleck  
21 Van Vleck Street  
Montclair, New Jersey 07042

(see next page for May 1980 listings)

May 1980

Harriet D. Carroll  
4802 Broad Brook Drive  
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Mr. & Mrs. T. Robin Cole III  
129 West Greenbrook Road  
North Caldwell, New Jersey 07006

Ernest & Anne Cook  
6921 Ayr Lane  
Bethesda, Maryland 20034

Mr. & Mrs. Charles P. Cummings  
1200 Silver Run Valley Road  
Westminster, Maryland 21157

Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Dellevie  
2821 29th Place, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20008

Michael & Mary Derig  
3 Cleveland Road  
Caldwell, New Jersey 07006

James A. Dove, Jr.  
839 Londontown Road  
Edgewater, Maryland 21037

Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Favali  
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Mr. & Mrs. Abe Hanopole  
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3618 Livingston Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20015

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Muriel E. Jones  
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McLean, Virginia 22101

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Josephine Shapiro  
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Myron & Charlotte Shpur  
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