

# The Azalean

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Journal of the Azalea Society of America



# President's Letter

*J Jackson—Trade, Tennessee*

Dear Azalea Friends,

The Autumnal Equinox has passed and the leaves are beginning to change here in the higher elevations of the Blue Ridge. Flower buds have formed on our azaleas and rhododendrons and the seed pods are almost ready to collect. This time of year we always look forward to hiking to our favorite plants growing in the wild for seed collecting.

Several of our chapters have annual seed and cutting exchanges or have plant sales to raise proceeds for chapter expenses. As our Membership Committee Chair **Chris Wetmore** reminds me, "Plant sales are not only about raising money, they are about gaining new members." The access to rare and unusual plant material surprises the general public and can increase interest in our Society. These activities are the most effective way to attract and retain members.

There is concern in several chapters due to lack of meetings and activities. Most plant societies are suffering from the same condition. Our Board of Directors is making efforts to extend assistance to chapters by seeking ways to increase interest. If we don't have active, interested members at the chapter level there is little that can be done by the Board of Directors. If we look at the active and growing chapters there is much to be learned by paying attention to how they manage their meetings. The healthy groups all coordinate interesting events to attract new members and retain the members they have. It can be discouraging to focus intently on the problem areas of our Society. Instead we must seek ways to improve what we have to offer to members.

The "Digitization Project Team" has completed the digitizing of all the past journals. Making past journal articles accessible through our ASA Web site is a huge improvement to the site's content. This is a wonderful change to our Internet presence. Other improvements to the web site are ongoing, and I believe these changes also will attract new members. Thank you to all of the members of the Team for a job well done!

I sent out a letter to the membership a few weeks back explaining the status and changes taking place with our journal. *The Azalean* has a new editing team with **Barbara Stump** as Editor and **Pam Fitch** as Layout Designer. Please be sure to support their efforts by writing something for the journal so we can keep to our quarterly schedule. Chapter news and articles are always needed to keep the journal contents interesting and entertaining and in helping suggest new ways of attracting new members.

Best regards,

*J Jackson*



J Jackson



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 which are in the subgenera *Tsutsusi* and *Pentanthera* of the genus *Rhododendron* in the Heath family (*Ericaceae*).

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Opinions and views expressed in *The Azalean* are those of the contributors or editor, not necessarily those of the Society, and are presented to foster a wider appreciation and knowledge of azaleas. Advertisements are presented as a service to our readers and do not imply endorsement by the Azalea Society of America. Advertising and other contributions to *The Azalean* are used exclusively to help defray the costs of publishing *The Azalean*.

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### On the Cover

*By Barbara Stump—Nacogdoches, Texas*

Glenn Dale Hybrid 'Festive' created quite a stir at the 2015 spring convention in Nacogdoches, since the row of 'Geisha' at one of our private garden tour gardens turned out not to be 'Geisha' but was, in fact, 'Festive'. I had read in *The Azalean* that the two were often confused because of their tendency to have purple or red streaks and speckles. Being naïve about the many subtleties of the 454 Glenn Dale azaleas in 1999, I decided to plant the two together in our Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden to see who would notice the difference. Of course, our ASA members had lots of questions about which was which. But, when we got to Bill Elliott's private garden, the vote was unanimous that the collection of 30 or so white azaleas with red flecks and streaks was, of course, not 'Geisha', but 'Festive'. See related article on page 54. Photo kindly supplied by Donald Hyatt.



# Joint ASA/ARS Convention—Williamsburg, VA

## April 20-24, 2016

We cordially invite you to a joint meeting of both the Azalea Society of America and the American Rhododendron Society in historic Colonial Williamsburg, VA. The meeting will be held from April 20-24, 2016, typically peak season for our dogwood and azalea bloom.

Our convention site is the Fort Magruder Hotel which is located near the Williamsburg Historic District. Our theme is “Legends and Legacies,” and we hope to reflect on those who have enriched our lives and our gardens.

### Garden Tours

Tours to the Historic District will be offered but we encourage attendees to explore those attractions on their own in small groups. Our primary garden tours will focus on public and private gardens in other nearby areas.

On Thursday, we will head to Richmond, the capital of Virginia, and the 80-acre Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. We will also visit two private gardens, one which has an extensive evergreen azalea collection and the other which is an elegant Japanese garden.

On Friday, we will explore the 155-acre Norfolk Botanical Gardens with its waterfront setting and many collections including the McDonald Azalea Garden. We will also visit a waterfront garden near Suffolk with an artistic landscape featuring rare companion plants.

Saturday’s tour will head to the town of Gloucester and the display garden of Brent and Becky’s Bulbs. We will tour several charming private gardens, each with a different focus.

### Speakers

We have many distinguished speakers, and Thursday night’s focus will be the legacies of great plant explorers. Our first speaker will be the famous colonial botanist, John Bartram, humorously portrayed by Kirk Brown, Vice President of the Garden Writers Association. He will be followed by one of our most celebrated modern plant



▲ Governor's Palace in Colonial Williamsburg

▼ Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden



explorers, Steve Hootman, Director of the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Federal Way, WA.

Rick Lewandowski, the former Director of Mt. Cuba Center, will be Friday’s keynote. He will discuss landscapes utilizing native azaleas and other native plants. Rick is now Director

of the Shangri La Botanical Gardens in Texas.

Saturday’s keynote will be Mike Stewart, past ARS President and noted nurseryman from Sandy, OR. He will share some of the contributions of legendary plant collectors and hybridizers, and their lasting legacies.





Photo By Don Hyatt



Photo Don Hyatt

▲ Norfolk Botanical Garden

## Plant Sale

Our members have been busy propagating rhododendrons and azaleas for the convention plant sale. We are anxious to showcase rare and unusual cultivars that deserve wider distribution among members of our societies. Among the many evergreen azaleas we are raising, expect to see hybrids from Dr. Sandra McDonald, Bob Stewart, Joe Klimavicz, and hybrid groups like Holly Springs, Bowie Mill, Marshy Point, and others. Deciduous azaleas will include hand pollinated seedlings raised from superior forms identified in the wild and others propagated vegetatively, too.

Our rhododendrons will be either cutting grown or grafted plants, and include many new and hard to find varieties. We will post a list of plants including images on our convention website well in advance of the meeting for those who want to research possible purchases. Every room at the hotel has a patio or balcony where plants can be easily tended during the meeting, so feel free to visit the sale early and often.

## Getting to the Convention

The Fort Magruder Hotel is conveniently situated off of Interstate I-64 at historic Colonial Williamsburg. Three international airports serve the greater Williamsburg area including Richmond, Norfolk, and Newport News. Taxi and shuttle services are available, and Williamsburg is also serviced by AMTRAK. The hotel has ample free parking. The hotel will be offering a special convention rate of \$119 per

night (single or double) which includes breakfast for two. This rate is valid for the period two days prior until two days after the scheduled convention. Attendees may reserve this rate by calling the hotel at (757) 220-2250 and identifying themselves as attendees at the ASA/ARS Joint Convention 2016 or by using the group code ASA on the hotel website [www.fortmagruderhotel.com](http://www.fortmagruderhotel.com).

A more detailed article will appear in the Winter issue of *The Azalean*. You are also invited to visit our website at <http://arsasaconvention2016.org>. This site is continuously updated as new information is available.

We hope to see you in Williamsburg in 2016!



Illustration Don Hyatt



# It was a 'Festive' Occasion

William C. Miller III—Bethesda, Maryland

I had a good time at the 2015 ASA National Convention that was in Nacogdoches at the end of March. Notwithstanding the 20 hours of driving to get there, I enjoyed seeing my friends, the food was good, the speakers were excellent, the tours were interesting, and the activities were well planned. On top of that, I came away with some really nice plants.

In one of the gardens on the tour (Bill Elliott's garden), there was an azalea bed of "white with stripes" flowers that had attracted a crowd. The question was raised, is it 'Festive' or is it 'Geisha', and how can you tell for sure? No one had a good answer. 'Festive' and 'Geisha' are quite similar, the chances are good that the two have been mixed in the trade more than once over the last 60 years with potentially logarithmic consequences, and at least one nurseryman, who shall remain nameless, opined in Jerry Goodman's back yard in 1986 that he wouldn't have a problem giving someone 'Festive' if they asked for 'Geisha'.

On background, it is worth mentioning that I have two large plants of 'Festive', with which I am quite comfortable. I don't have 'Geisha', so I have had to rely on ASA images and 'Geisha' images provided by Dan Krabill. 'Festive' and 'Geisha' are two of the "white with stripes" Glenn Dale hybrids derived from 'Vittatum', a Southern Indian hybrid. One hundred and eighteen of the Glenn Dale hybrids have 'Vittatum' either as a seed or pollen parent or in the lineage of one of the parents. That means that almost 26% of the 454 Glenn Dale hybrids could carry or express the high variability trait for which 'Vittatum' is recognized. In both cases, the seed parent is 'Vittatum', and Morrison obtained the parent plant from Fruitland Nurseries in Augusta, Georgia in 1928. For a general comparison of 'Festive' and 'Geisha', see Table 1.

The Monograph 20 (revised) description for 'Festive' is: "Erect, somewhat spreading growth, to 6 feet. Leaves medium green, somewhat pointed. Flowers 2 to 2½ inches across, usually 2 to 4 in head, but heads sometimes clus-

tered, pure white with no blotch, freely sanded and occasionally striped with dull rose (between Spinel Red [RHS 58A, strong purplish Red] and Rose Color [RHS 63B, deep purplish Pink/vivid purplish Red]) effect from distance flesh white. Mid-April."

The corresponding description for 'Geisha' is: "Tall, erect to spreading habit, but not over 6 feet. Leaves me-



Photo William C. Miller III

▲ 'Vittatum' (Syn: 'Vittatum Fortunei'), a highly variable Southern Indian hybrid that Morrison acquired from Fruitland Nurseries in 1928. It was Morrison's goal to use it as both a seed and pollen parent with "everything available" to see if striped flowers would appear in the F1 generation.

▼ Table 1. Table showing that 'Geisha' and 'Festive' have only the seed parent in common. [For a discussion of the various numbering systems utilized by the Glenn Dale Station, see Miller, West, and Bullock, *The Azalean*, March 1992, Vol. 14: (1) 9]

Cultivar	Formula (seed parent × pollen parent)	Seed Lot	Bell No. ----- PI No.	White Flower with ... Stripes and Sectors/ Blotch?	Year Selected	Officially Distributed
'Geisha'	'Vittatum' × 'Miyagino'	B13571	B27445 141774	reddish Purple/ Yes, chartreuse	1937	1942
'Festive'	'Vittatum' × 'Ho-oden'	B13558	B32141 141779	purplish Red/ No, not really	1939	1948, 1949



▲ 'Festive' (from author's garden, 2015) (L to R) Flowers 1 and 3 are typical white with striped and sectoral flowers. Flower 2 is the irregular white margin sport. Flower 4 is the self-colored sport, the color of the stripe, which has been named 'Mike Bullard'. Flower 5 shows a typical white flower with a "sanding." Note the absence of a well defined blotch.

▼ 'Geisha' (from Dan Krabill's garden, 2012) Note the reddish Purple stripe and the well defined chartreuse (yellowish Green) dots in the blotch area.



dium green. Flowers abundant, 1½ to 2 inches across, 2 to 4 in head, often massed, white, with chartreuse blotch, flaked and striped with Livid Purple [RHS 79D, moderate reddish Purple]. All self-colored purple branches should be removed."

The official descriptions are useful but they have their limitations. Reported sizes are for ten-year-old plants, and a 40-year-old plant would be considerable larger than six feet. One also has to develop a sense for acceptable cultivar variation in color and flower characteristics from plant to plant, from garden to garden, and from year to year. Viewed another way, your 'Geisha' might not look exactly like my 'Geisha' due to the effect of any of a number of environmental influences.

Sporting is not a well understood phenomenon, and the official descriptions do not report all of the possible color arrangements a 'Vittatum' derivative may present. A "white with stripes" cultivar could produce (1) self-colored white flowers, (2) self-colored flowers the color of the stripe, (3) flowers with irregular white margins, and (4) bordered flowers (a colored border with a white or slightly tinted eye). By far, the most common sport seen on both plants is the self-colored flower the color of the stripe. And, in the case of 'Festive', the Red, self-colored sport has been named 'Mike Bullard', a Pennington hybrid.

Morrison's recommendation to remove self-colored branches had nothing to do with his personal preferences. Some have incorrectly speculated that Morrison didn't like sports. Rather, his suggestion was a practical matter for the benefit of the nurserymen who would be propagating these plants for sale to the public. The early removal of atypical branches, prior to taking cuttings, meant that the resulting



plants would most likely be consistent with the official description. And, it wouldn't be necessary for the nurseryman to grow the new plants on to a size where the sports could be rogued out by inspection.

In conclusion, a side-by-side comparison of self-colored sports (the color of the stripe) would probably make the identification process easier. It fundamentally comes down to one being asked to distinguish purplish-red from reddish-purple, recognizing the acceptable limits of variability. The other diagnostic factor is making a judgment on the organization of the dots in the blotch area. In other words, 'Festive' is purplish Red (or Red) and has no blotch (or not much of one). 'Geisha' is reddish Purple (or Purple) and has a distinctive chartreuse blotch.

With the 'Festive' and 'Geisha' question put to rest, can anyone tell 'Herbert' from 'Purple Splendor'?

## References

1. Undated and unpublished working paper found in the files at the Glenn Dale Plant Introduction Station ("Bell Station") that describes Morrison's extensive evaluation of 'Vittatum' as a seed and pollen parent.
2. West, R. T. and Miller III, W. C., *The Glenn Dale Azaleas - Revised 1996*. The Azalea Works, Bethesda, MD 1996. Available on the Internet at [www.theazaleaworks.com](http://www.theazaleaworks.com).
3. Miller III, W. C. And West, R. T., *The Bell Book: A Companion to Agriculture Monograph 20*. The Azalea Works, Bethesda, MD 1996. Available on the Internet at [www.theazaleaworks.com](http://www.theazaleaworks.com).
4. West, R. T., Miller III, W. C., Bullock, B. L., *The Massed Glenn Dale Azaleas on Mt. Hamilton: A Valuable Collection at the National Arboretum, The Azalean*, March 1992; Vol. 14 (1): 8-13.

**William C. Miller III** is a recipient of the Brookside Gardens Chapter's Frederic P. Lee Commendation (1988), and is twice the recipient of the ASA's Distinguished Service Award (1995 and 2002). He was chairman of the ASA's Glenn Dale Preservation Project, and a co-chairman of Dick West's Ten Oaks Glenn Dale Project. His is past president of the Brookside Gardens chapter, a former vice president of the ASA, a past member of the ASA board of directors, past co-chairman of the ASA's membership committee, past chairman of the ASA's public information committee, a long time ASA member, and a frequent contributor to *The Azalean*.

## New Members

### At Large

Calvin & Linda Hill  
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Hartsville, SC 29550-8035

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Yan Chen  
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Hammond, LA 70403-0533

Gina Hebert  
21549 Old Covington Highway  
Hammond, LA 70403-0533

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4705 Southshore Drive  
Metairie, LA 70002-1432

Jason Stagg  
21549 Old Covington Highway  
Hammond, LA 70403-0533

### Southern California

Tim Walsh  
2050 Irving Drive  
Eureka, CA 95503-7022

### Texas

Robert Thau  
128 FM 254 N  
Jasper, TX 75951

### Vaseyi

Paul & Penny Kahkola  
1423 Bethvale Drive  
Greenback, TN 37742-3441

The Azalea Society offers membership to any one with an interest in azaleas, from home gardeners, collectors and students to plant professionals. Local chapters have social activities, garden tours, meetings and plant sales of unusual varieties. National conventions offer garden tours, talks by well-known azalea authorities, plant sales, and the opportunities to make and renew friendships. *The Azalean*, our quarterly journal, has timely informative articles about azalea culture, hybridizing, propagation, garden design, new introductions and chapter activities.

To join the society or for more information, visit our Web site at [www.azaleas.org](http://www.azaleas.org).



# We're Back—Editors Return to Create *The Azalean* Again

Barbara Stump and Pam Fitch—Nacogdoches, Texas

Let us re-introduce ourselves—**Barbara Stump**, current Vice President of the ASA who also served as the Editor of *The Azalean* from 1998 through 2007, and only gave it up to continue work at the Stephen F. Austin State University Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden in Nacogdoches, Texas, has returned to serve as Editor of the journal.

Joining her is **Pam Fitch**, who served as Editor of *The Azalean* from 2007 through 2011. Pam will serve as Graphic Designer.

Barbara became involved in the ASA while completing her graduate degree at SFA. She designed and oversaw development of the Ruby M. Mize Azalea garden on the university's campus as a graduate student. After earning her Master's degree, she joined the staff in the College of Forestry and Agriculture serving as a Research Associate for the SFA gardens. She retired in August.

Barbara was instrumental in re-organizing the ASA Texas Chapter in 2010. She also served as the co-chairperson for the 2007 and 2015 annual ASA conventions which were held in Nacogdoches, Texas.

Pam became involved in the ASA in 2005 while working with Barbara on the development of the Nacogdoches Azalea Trail. She cheerfully works alongside Barbara to promote azaleas and the Society.

She and her husband, Alan, own two businesses closely related to SFA: Jack Backers College Bookstore and Spirit Custom Apparel, a custom screen printing and embroidery business. She is a very creative designer, as was seen in the design of the bags and badges for the 2015 ASA Convention in Nacogdoches.

The editorial team will be using the same custom printer in Texas we used before when we were editors. They provide excellent quality printing and mailing services.

The good news is that the new team is already nearly finished with the de-

sign of the Fall 2015 issue, and hope to get it to the printer before the end of September. Then, we'll immediately concentrate on the combined ARS/ASA national convention information, for which co-chairs **Rich Bauer** and **Don Hyatt** already have several articles ready.

Our goal, as has always been the goal of editors, is the highest quality quarterly journal out on a regular schedule that is of interest to a wide range of member interests.

Your double Spring/Summer issue of *The Azalean* should be headed for your mailboxes now. We all know the past few years have been difficult for two sets of editors. Health issues have been the primary personal difficulty, but not the only one. **Connie Cottingham**, **Mike Sikes** and **Lisa Kennedy** did wonderful work over the past couple of years, and we will do the same. But we cannot do it alone. This is where you come in.

The editors' main problem has always been the lack of a continuous stream of interesting articles about all phases of azaleas. If we have no articles to print, the editors and designers have nothing to produce. The way we see it, our members are a varied group, with many levels of interest. We have attracted brand new members who haven't grown or propagated anything to Ph.D. scientists who are researching the growth ranges of new azalea hybrids and commercial growers who want to produce azaleas that members would like for their gardens in nearly every growing zone.

The bottom line is that each has a desire to learn more about azaleas. Each group looks to the Azalea Society of America for information, both via the Web site [www.azaleas.org](http://www.azaleas.org) and by reading the quarterly issues of *The Azalean* to keep abreast of all facets of azaleas. We encourage you to write for the journal; even if you think "I can't write," we know that's not true. We can help smooth out any confusing points or suggest which of your photos look

best in the journal. Or, get your friends to write articles and you help them to illustrate them with drawings or photos. Topics that come to mind for good articles we'd like to receive in the future are:

- How to take cuttings, propagate new azaleas from seed, how to care for them (yes, we need the reminders every year), preferably with drawings
- How to identify hybrid groups and why they're important
- Special features on the ASA Web site that can help keep azaleas alive—the AskUs page, for example
- Public azalea gardens to visit—as chapters or as just visitors—with a write-up and photos to show others what these gardens can teach the visitor on-the-ground to do that a book alone cannot
- Speakers who've provided unique insights into garden design, color combinations, hybrid combinations
- Newest azalea research—through our Azalea Research Foundation or other universities or commercial azalea nurseries

We look forward to the challenge and opportunity of bringing new material to all of the members, not just those few who "took a trip and took lots of pictures" and think others should go as well. If you tell the rest of us in *The Azalean*, we just might.

It is easy to submit articles—online at [TheAzalean@gmail.com](mailto:TheAzalean@gmail.com), or by postal service (if you need us to scan photos for example): Barbara Stump, Editor, *The Azalean*, 101 S. Sanders Street, Nacogdoches, Texas 75964.

# The Azalean Articles Available on the ASA Web Site—An Update

The ASA Board of Directors (BOD) approved the recommendation presented by a research team (David Banks, Paul Beck, and Rick and Susan Bauer), now called the Digitization Team and chaired by Susan Bauer, to place *The Azalean* articles on the ASA Web site. The Digitization Team will implement the project by gaining copyright agreements, digitizing back issue articles and placing *The Azalean* articles on the ASA web site.

The BOD also established a Digitization Committee, chaired by David Banks, the ASA Webmaster, to facilitate management and maintenance of *The Azalean* articles on the ASA Web site (and in the future, possible placement of *The Azalean* articles on the Virginia Tech Digital Library and Archives Web site).

*The Azalean* journal articles will be placed on the ASA Web site as soon as copyright agreements are obtained. In order to provide web site access to the journal articles, without legally endangering the ASA due to copyright infringement laws, the ASA must request that authors/photographers provide written publication permission.

The articles can be found by clicking on the Archives menu on the ASA Web site, or by following the link in the section titled “read it online” on the page displayed when clicking on *The Azalean* menu. Please note that the most recent 12 issues are available only to logged-in ASA members, as directed by the BOD. In order to validate your membership, you must login on the ASA Web site. If you have not already done so, you must first obtain a login by registering. There is a **Login and Register** button in the upper left corner of the page; alternatively, you may click the appropri-

ate link in the **NOTE**: at the end of the instructions. See Figure 1.

The ASA Web site contains a complete journal index with article titles and associated author(s). As articles are digitized and copyright agreements obtained, the articles will be made available on the ASA Web site. In order to view the individual articles, you must first click the **Click here to make articles viewable** link at the top of the article title column. See Figure 2.

The articles will then be viewable through the index by clicking on the (View) link after the article title. See Figure 3.

As an added feature, the web site now facilitates ordering back issues of *The Azalean*. Please note that the “Add to Cart” button associated with each volume listed on the index, and shown above, allows for the easy purchase of a complete back issue of *The Azalean*.

The index includes title, keyword, author and date search capabilities. Instructions are on the web page for using the search. Eventually, the entire collection of *The Azalean* articles may be searched based on specific word requirements,

assuming necessary copyright agreements are obtained. See Figure 4.

The Digitization Team is engaged in sending out and receiving signed copyright agreements. The team started with the authors from the Fall 2014 journal and is working back in time. Over 300 authors have been identified. Thus far over 170 copyright agreements have been forwarded to authors, either by e-mail or snail-mail. To date 97 authors have provided their agreements.

All of the articles from 2011 to present of *The Azalean* are now

Figure 1

**NOTE:** You must be an ASA member and login to view the 12 most recent Azaleans. If you have not yet registered for an account, you must do that first.

Figure 2

Volume 33, Number 3, Fall 2011 (39 available)		
Domestic (US, CAN, MEX) \$1.00 USD		<a href="#">Add to Cart</a>
Pg	Article Title	Author
	<a href="#">Click here to make articles viewable</a>	
49	Cover	
50	President's Letter	John Migas

Figure 3

Volume 33, Number 3, Fall 2011 (39 available)		
Domestic (US, CAN, MEX) \$1.00 USD		<a href="#">Add to Cart</a>
Pg	Article Title	
49	Cover <a href="#">(View)</a>	
50	President's Letter <a href="#">(View)</a>	
51	Table of Contents <a href="#">(View)</a>	

Figure 4

Keywords:	<input type="text" value="Multiple words, find all listed"/>	From:	<input type="text" value="YYYY"/>	<a href="#">Find</a>
Authors:	<input type="text" value="Multiple authors, find all listed"/>	To:	<input type="text" value="YYYY"/>	<a href="#">Clear</a>



viewable on the ASA Web site, provided that a copyright agreement has been received from the author(s) of each article. Go to Archives Menu to see *The Azalean* Index. Click on the title of the article you would like to see, and it will be opened in a new tab or page.

The Team will continue digitizing back issues articles of *The Azalean* working backwards from 2010. The back issues of the journal contain a wealth of information that will become readily available via the ASA Web site and the search for specific subjects will be enhanced by the index search capabilities.

Article access will not be available without the copyright agreement from the author or the author's family/estate representative. Thus, the Team will be continuing with its efforts to gain copyright agreements from all authors, or their family/estate representative.

The Digitization Team requests member assistance in locating the following authors or a member of their family or estate representative, as appropriate. If you have information on how to contact any of the listed individuals, please contact Susan H. Bauer at [bauersh@aol.com](mailto:bauersh@aol.com), or 115 Hunters Drive, Yorktown, VA 23692 or 757-833-7737.

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Please, check out the ASA Web site to see the Digitization Team's progress.

# Protecting Pollinators: Part II

## A Brief Summary of Recent Research

By Stanton A. Gill

In **Protecting Pollinators, Part I**<sup>1</sup>, Paula Shrewsbury and I covered the concerns about potential negative impacts on pollinators. In Part II, I cover some of the recent research conducted in Europe regarding the impact of neonicotinoids and some fungicides on honey bee colonies.

### Introduction

Entomologists in the United States and Europe are investigating the multiple causes of the decline in health of pollinators, with much of the concentration on honey bees and bumble bees. This article is to update people in the horticulture industry on what is being found through scientific research in America and Europe.

### Varroa Mites

One of the causes of honey bee and bumble bee troubles is a small parasitic mite called a varroa mite. Varroa mites were first found in Maryland in the early 1990s. Since then, these mites have been found in honey bee colonies worldwide. How do the mites spread to a bee colony? Varroa mites spread from colony to colony by workers and drones drifting within an apiary. Honey bees can also acquire these mites when robbing smaller colonies. The mite is also moved about by transporting honey bee colonies from one state to another.

Varroa mites are external honey bee parasites that attack both the adults and the brood, with a distinct preference for drone brood. They suck the blood from both the adults and the developing brood, weakening and shortening the life spans of the ones on which they feed. Emerging broods may be deformed with missing legs or wings. Untreated, infestations of varroa mites will increase and kill honey bee colonies. The varroa mite has also been found to transmit diseases to the bees. Under field conditions, varroa mites, *Varroa jacobsoni*, were shown to be highly effective vectors of deformed wing virus (DWV) between bees. This viral disease causes bees to have deformed wings that do not allow flight. A relationship was found between increasing numbers of mites on individual bees and the incidence of morphological deformity and death.

The adult female mites are reddish-brown in color, flattened, oval, and measure about 1 to 1.5 mm across. They have eight legs. They are large enough to be seen with the unaided eye on the bee's thorax, most commonly, and also on the abdomen. Their flattened shape allows them to hide between the bee's abdominal segments.

### How are Bee Keepers Controlling Varroa Mites?

If a colony is found to be infested, all colonies at the site are generally treated for mites with Apistan strips. These

strips contain the miticide fluvalinate and are not to be used during honey flow or when there is surplus honey present in the colony that may be removed for human consumption at a later date. This use of a miticide in a honey bee colony is not completely desirable for the health of the bees, but the varroa mite is considered the greater threat to bee colony health. A predatory mite that has been used for fungus gnat control is now being used in honey bee colonies to reduce varroa mite populations. *Hypoaspis miles* was tested by researchers and honey bee keepers in Canada during 2013 and 2014 to measure the effects of the predatory mite on the numbers of varroa mites in infected hives. Positive results have been found so far.

### Impacts of Neonicotinoids and Fungicides on Bees

Several researchers are examining the impact of neonicotinoids and classes of fungicides including chlorothalonil as to how they impact bees. Researchers in England have developed a small transmitting antenna that weighs 1/10 the weight of the honey bee female. The female honey bee can carry up to half of her body weight in nectar and pollen so the weight of the antenna does not impinge on the honey bee's flight. The small micro-antenna is attached to the upper thorax of the honey bee, and then the honey bee is released. The researchers used a radar disc and computer software to track the flight of the honey bee. Honey bee researchers in Germany are using the system developed by the English to track honey bees exposed to neonicotinoids, exposed under lab conditions. They have found that exposing bees to 5 – 50 parts per billion (ppb) of a neonicotinoid results in bee behavior modification, and in some cases, death. Untreated honey bees were released along with bees fed the nectar with a neonicotinoid added at 6 ppb. The bees were released and allowed to return to the hive. The bees appear to have an internal tracking system that allows them to find their own hive. When they are released in unfamiliar surroundings they will use visual cues to locate the hive. The treated and untreated bees returned with little trouble. They varied the trials moving the honey bees to an unfamiliar location and released bees treated with neonicotinoids along with control honey bees. The untreated honey bees found the hive 100% of the time in the trials. Honey bees treated with neonicotinoids had greater difficulty locating the hive with the visual cues, and many did not return to the hive. Keep in mind these honey bees were artificially treated in lab conditions before being released.

Researchers in England are mounting the micro-antennas on honey bees, tracking their foraging patterns, and looking at what flowers they are visiting. The purpose is to determine if in field conditions the honey bees dilute the neonicotinoid nectar with other nectar sources and what im-



pact this has on bee health. This research is continuing into 2015 and the results will hopefully be available sometime in 2015.

In France, neonicotinoids were banned over 10 years ago and bee keepers continue to experience colony bee health issues even in the absence of neonicotinoids. Neonicotinoids are widely used in agriculture in Australia and, so far, the bee colonies appear to be doing fine.

## Pollen Sources

Land-use researchers are looking at historical use of agricultural land and comparing it to modern agricultural practices. One thing they have noted is that in the early 20th century the agricultural land use involved multiple crops with many open areas with diverse pollen sources. In the 21st century they noted large areas of a limited number of crops planted in large blocks. Many of these crops are poor pollen sources for pollinators. Bee colony health appears to be tied to honey bee foraging on multiple sources of nectar. In England they are conducting field trials on cooperating farms by planting strips of various flowers to serve as a diverse nectar source. They are finding bumble bee species

populations are up to six times greater in number at the farm planting pollen-rich and diverse flower sources. This practice of planting pollen source planting strips, at least based on early stages of investigation, appears to be a good way to improve pollinator health.

We will continue to keep you informed on pollinator health and ways you can help maintain healthy populations of pollinators at your farms, nurseries and landscapes.

## References

<sup>1</sup> Published in *The Azalean*, Spring-Summer, 2015: 37 (1-2): 25-27. Please see author's note in that issue for relevance to azalea gardens.

**Stanton A. Gill**, *Extension Specialist in IPM and Entomology for Nurseries and Greenhouses at the Central Maryland Research and Education Center and Professor of Landscape Technology at the Germantown Campus of Montgomery College.*

# ASA Seed Exchange

*By Lindy Johnson*

## Contributing Seed

Seed contributions will be accepted from ASA members and other sources throughout the year until December 31.

The seed from each plant should be described by the:

- contributor's name
- seed parent name
- pollen parent name
- plant type (evergreen, deciduous, azaleodendron)
- pollination type (open pollinated, hand pollinated or wild cutting)
- where collected (geographic feature or town)
- notes

This information can be written on seed envelopes, or we have a seed data form to describe the seed, as a short (4KB) file to download and print.

If you have digital pictures of the parents, please e-mail them to Dave Banks, with the name, date and location taken, for posting on the web linked to your seed. [dfbanks@earthlink.net](mailto:dfbanks@earthlink.net).

Seed should be current year production and can be cleaned or not. Put the seed from one plant into one paper envelope with one completed form (or write the information on the envelope), and mail to: Lindy Johnson, 843 Wallace Rd, Trade, TN 37691.

When we receive the seed, it is cleaned and distributed into #1 coin envelopes, and each lot of envelopes is assigned a number and stored until it is ordered.

## Ordering Seed

The seed list will be posted online on or about January 1st. The notice also gives the address to request a hard copy list of seed available.

Seed is shown on the web on a seed list page, where it is listed alphabetically by seed parent name with the information provided by the seed contributor, including links to any pictures of the parent plants.

After January 1st seed is distributed to contributors and ASA members on a first come, first served basis. After April 1st seed is distributed to anyone on a first come, first served basis.

All seed is packaged in #1 coin envelopes, and costs \$2.00 for approximately 50 seeds. Shipping and handling is an additional \$3.00 for all the envelopes in one order. Orders can be placed by e-mail to [appalnativeplants@gmail.com](mailto:appalnativeplants@gmail.com) or by a letter addressed to the Lindy's address provided above.

All seed not distributed before the annual convention will be offered for sale there.

Seed orders can be paid for with a check made out to "ASA" with "seed exchange" on the memo line, or by a credit card payment through PayPal using the form on the Seed Exchange 2016 page.

# Chapter News

## Central Carolinas Chapter

*Chris Wetmore, President*

April 11 meeting: Central Carolinas had an off-topic meeting. Ron Dollyhite, Chair Horticulture Technology and Campus Gardens at Wilkes Community College, gave an interactive presentation on grafting apple trees. Participants took home apple trees they had grafted. These same grafting skills can be used on other types of trees such as Japanese maples.

May 16 meeting: The chapter was very fortunate to host **Bob Head** who gave an expert level crash course on soil preparation and fertilizing azaleas. Bob also covered hybridizing.

September 19 meeting: **Joe Coleman** made a presentation on natural hybrid azaleas at Hurricane Creek. The meeting will be 10am-12pm at Central Piedmont Community Col-



Photo Christopher Wetmore

▲ Ron Dollyhite demonstrates grafting.

▼ Bob Head addressing the Central Carolinas Chapter.



Photo Christopher Wetmore

lege Cato Campus in the Horticulture Building. 8120 Grier Rd Charlotte, NC 28215. Guests are welcome to attend.

November 21 meeting: We'll hold the Central Carolinas Annual Banquet. Stan Southerland will be giving a presentation on heat-tolerant rhododendrons. There will also be a silent auction with many rare azaleas, rhododendrons, and camellias available to those present. The meeting will be 10am-12pm at CPCC Cato Campus in the Horticulture Building, 8120 Grier Rd Charlotte, NC 28215. Guests are welcome to attend.

## Northern VA Chapter

*Barry Sperling, Corresponding Secretary*

Late July saw the Northern Virginia Chapter reconvene for the annual cutting exchange, plant exchange, general meeting and food extravaganza.

After a large lunch and a meeting involving details for the operation of the upcoming annual convention, the cuttings and plant offerings were distributed and everyone got what they had their eyes on as the selections covered many tables and many hybrids. The club welcomed people from the Ben Morrison Chapter and **Joe Coleman** made his annual visit from Georgia.

**Susan Bauer** has taken over the complicated process of digitizing the old Azaleans and getting permissions for this from the writers and photographers involved. **Paul Beck** has programmed our chapter web site to allow these to be viewed, as well as the non-trivial task of putting the whole ASA membership database online and retrievable by mem-

▼ David Meadows, Carolyn Beck and Lars Larson inspect cuttings during the Northern VA Chapter meeting. Larry Martin is shown in the background.



Photo Barry Sperling



bers. He's also getting ready for the web site to host the data for the 2016 convention.

We're looking forward to meeting for a lecture in October and then again for the annual Holiday Social in December, closing out another successful year.

## Texas Chapter

*Sherrie Randall, Secretary*

Texas Chapter members sold evergreen and deciduous azaleas at the Nacogdoches Farmer's Market Saturday, September 19th. The Market is located at the old "hitch lot" in historic downtown Nacogdoches.

The 200+ leftover plants from the ASA 2015 convention plant sale were potted up and grown up since late March. Members are hoping to encourage, and educate gardeners in the benefits of planting azaleas in the Fall instead of Spring. Since the evergreen plants are cuttings from SFA's Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden, this also gives the local community an opportunity to purchase and grow plants not easily available at local nurseries.

Evergreen choices ranged from the diminutive 'Chinzan' to the gardens' signature 'Koromo-shikibu'. Handouts will be available with growing tips, as well as information on joining the Azalea Society. This is our first try of this approach, and hope to target people who actually grow plants and enjoy those that come from our local community. Watch for news in the next issue on Bart Brechter's Blog idea to keep our large Texas area connected.

## Vaseyi Chapter News

*Audrey Stelloh, President*

Our September 27th meeting held a joint meeting with the Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. Our speaker was **Betty Montgomery**, a Master Gardener and author and member of both Vaseyi and SE-ARS. Betty writes the monthly garden article in the Hendersonville Times News. She has 40 years of love and labor in two spectacular, artistic, Zone 7 gardens in the Carolinas. One garden in South Carolina and one in North Carolina. Betty recently published a book called "A Four Season Southern Garden" and will give us a presentation based on her book. After the presentation we held a live auction plant sale of miscellaneous plants brought in by members. The charming and witty Doley Bell ran the auction and proceeds will be split between the two chapters.

Our November 8th meeting will start with our annual pot luck and BBQ social. **J Jackson** (ASA President) and **Lindy Johnson** (ASA Seed Exchange Chairperson) will give a presentation detailing how to grow native azaleas from seed. People can bring seeds to share. For information, contact Audrey Stelloh at alexadogg@gmail.com.

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*Chapter News submissions and photos may be emailed to theazalean@gmail.com.*

# Membership Note

*By Chris Wetmore*

Greetings Everyone,

I recently accepted the position of ASA Membership Chairman. In each upcoming issue of *The Azalean* I will focus on items that can help chapters grow or retain membership. This does not mean that I am going to ask chapters to go door to door or require residents in each town to register in an Azalea Society "draft." I will just be reaching out to members in the Society to provide insight as to how an event or process works for other chapters. Sometimes this will come from my own experiences, but most often it will come from others.

The first item I want to visit is plant sales. Quite often when people think plant sales they think raising money. The biggest benefit to these plant sales is often overlooked. **Rick Bauer**, with the Northern Virginia Chapter, discusses plant sales below.

"We seem to be having the most luck with the plant sales, since it makes us known to the public. We have a membership corner with a DVD playing showing our activities, flyers for the ASA, membership flyers and flyers for the 2016 convention as well as one on Azalea Care. We capture the email addresses of customers and ask if they'd like to receive our monthly chapter email. If so, we add them to the mailing list. The first time I mail to them I do it in a separate email, thanking them for buying plants from us, telling them why they are receiving the email and telling them they can be taken off the mailing list by contacting me. Also, we have picked up a couple of members by giving guests free plants at meetings. They were so impressed they joined."

Rick shared this information with me not when I asked how his chapter does plant sales, but when I asked him "What event that you held, regardless of how many years ago, yielded the most new members?" Now, for your sales can it be expected that you will be able to have a DVD player set up? Not necessarily, and that is not the intended message.

What I hope those reading this will take away the message to get out there and start small. You will figure out what works in your area; the important thing is to get out there. Your first and second and even third sale will not be perfect. You will always have something you can improve upon. Just stay positive and remember to have fun!

# Board Approves Investment Policy

The ASA Board of Directors approved a new investment policy during its annual meeting at the 2015 convention in Nacogdoches, Texas.

The policy is printed below and is also available on the ASA Web site, [www.azaleas.org](http://www.azaleas.org), under the Archives menu, Financials tab. You must be a registered member to view the policy online.

## 1. Roles and Responsibilities

The Finance Committee will establish and approve all investment objectives and policies for the Endowment Fund ("EF") and the Azalea Research Fund ("ARF") and review the allocation of assets, the performance of the investments, and the performance of the investment managers at least annually.

The Finance Committee will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the investment portfolio, review of the financial performance of investments, selection of any mutual funds for investment and determination of amounts to be invested in each such mutual funds, and determination of the amount and types of investments in other instruments including CDs at depository institutions and U.S. government securities. The Finance Committee will submit a report of investment performance to the ASA Board and the Azalea Research Committee at least annually, and more often when appropriate. In addition, the Finance Committee will submit quarterly investment statements from brokerage accounts to the Executive Committee and Azalea Research Committee.

The Treasurer will execute purchases and sales of investments as directed by the Finance Committee, oversee the safekeeping of the investments, and receive financial statements for all investments.

All investments in common and preferred stocks will be made through mutual fund managers.

The Board Executive Committee shall approve in advance all depositories, Investment Advisors, and investments in common and preferred stocks.

## 2. Investment Objectives and Guidelines

The investment objectives and performance of the EF and the ARF are to be measured in terms of total return, which is defined as interest plus dividends plus realized, and unrealized net capital gains and losses. The investment objectives of the EF and ARF are long-term growth of capital and preservation of purchasing power. The investment objectives should be pursued as a long-term goal, and the ASA board and committees need to recognize that returns on common stocks will vary from year to year based in large part on stock market conditions and may be negative some years.

## 3. Permissible Investments

The Finance Committee shall be authorized to invest the EF and ARF assets in the following instruments. Any investment not listed below is not permitted.

### Cash & Equivalents

Insured bank accounts  
Money market funds  
Certificates of deposit  
Repurchase agreements  
Commercial Paper rated A1/P1 or higher  
Cash accounts at brokerage firms

### Fixed Income

Debt securities issued by the U.S. Government and its agencies.

Debt securities and convertible bonds issued by U.S. Corporations rated BBB/BAA or better by Standard and Poor's or Moody's.

Mutual funds or exchange traded funds investing in the above.

### Equities

Common or preferred stocks of U.S. and foreign corporations, through mutual funds investing in such common and preferred stocks, subject to the following asset allocation and diversification limitations:

**Diversification.** No more than 10% (at market) of the EF or the ARF may be invested in the securities of any one issuer, with the exception of obligations of the U.S. Government and its agencies and instrumentalities; repurchase agreements collateralized by obligations of the U.S. Government and its agencies and instrumentalities; federally insured certificates of deposit; mutual funds; and exchange traded funds. No more than 20% (at market) of the equity portion of the EF or ARF may be invested in any one industry.

**Asset Allocation.** A maximum of 40% of the assets of the EF and a maximum of 60% of the assets of the ARF may be invested in common or preferred stocks of U.S. or foreign corporations. The portfolio's asset allocation will be monitored regularly, at least annually. In the event that percentage of stocks in the Endowment Fund or the ARF exceeds the maximum percentage, the portfolio will be rebalanced to bring the allocation back in line with the maximum allocation. A minimum of 25 percent of the ARF and 30 percent of the EF will be invested in cash & equivalents, insured bank accounts, money market accounts, certificates of deposits, repurchase agreements, Commercial paper rated A1/P1 or higher, cash Accounts at brokerage firms, debt securities issued by the US Government and its Agencies.



# The Impact of Simplicity: Design in the Japanese Style

*By Frank Robinson—Richmond, Virginia*

Gardens are, for most of us, a labor of love—at least as long as Mother Nature cooperates with us, and is moderate in her blessings of rain, summer sun, ice, and assorted biblical plagues! Many people, however, are frustrated with the outcome of their efforts—the finished look evades them; the idyllic dream in their mind looks far different in reality; the garden itself becomes an ever-demanding voracious stepchild that needs more and more attention, and doesn't give hugs in return!

One of the major causes of that gap between our inspired vision and reality is a lack of design in the garden, or a design which is too ambitious. For those of us who have inherited the western concept of the garden as a complexity, and who are often inclined to assemble horticultural zoos in our gardens (one or two of everything interesting), a goal in mind is a valuable asset. Plans do not have to be elaborate, but the garden creator must make some basic decisions about what the garden is to be in its essence—a quiet shaded retreat, a symphony of color, a natural garden of native species, or a functional place in which to entertain. No matter what the ultimate goal, we often make the job more difficult by not knowing where to stop. The same problems arise in interior decorating—when one more pattern or one more accent piece puts the room over the edge. Overload happens in gardens far too often.

The issue of design in the garden is particularly fascinating when cultural traditions are compared. The process or activity of gardening is universal, but the end product is vastly different from culture to culture. I find the Japanese experience in garden design to be both beautiful and inspiring. I think its strengths lie in the principle that, often, less is more.

Simple design can be elegant, relaxing, quieting and, in its own way, dramatic. In the Japanese tradition, gardens were often spaces created for retreat, contemplation, and healing. It is for these reasons, I believe, individuals of Western traditions find them so appealing. It would be a mistake to assume that design is simplistic. This is far from the truth; but the craft and artistry of the design result in wonderfully beautiful spaces which have a universal appeal to the human soul.

There are specific cultural reasons which have guided the design traditions of Japan—including the Shinto perception of the animation of all natural elements—trees, rocks, plants, water, etc. The Shinto religion focuses, in part, on the “aweness” of life. That “aweness” can often be seen and felt in garden spaces in Japan. Additionally, Buddhism taught the value of contemplation and of striving for oneness with nature. The expression of these values and the efforts to create spaces enhancing these goals are other familiar experiences in the gardens of Japan.

Japan is an older culture than ours in the United States, and one with stronger, more consistent traditions. There is overall a greater respect for nature in the Japanese culture,

strongly steeped in their traditional arts, architecture, and celebrations—a stronger sense of connection to the natural world. There is willingness to go the extra mile in gardening technique to ensure the well-being and unique characteristics of a majestic and venerable plant in the garden scheme. This is often seen in the tedious installation of support poles to old pines with elongated limbs, and the elaborate “snow umbrellas” erected to support branches through the heavy snows of winter. Similar techniques can be seen in older cultures in Western Europe as well.

Gardens in Japan are often intended to guide one through a mental journey. They try to focus attention, let one escape the temporal world, assist one to rise to a higher level of consciousness and concentration, and help one to value the beauty and richness of the natural world around us. They



Photo Frank Robinson

▲ A collection of lanterns and pagodas in a wholesale sale yard waiting to create the perfect impact.

▼ An exquisite aqua-veined rock that is set into an area of gray raked sand.



Photo Frank Robinson



often attempt to idealize nature—to take plants and plant combinations beyond what nature herself may offer. This may be done through training techniques, pruning, bonsai, and careful combination of plants for their interactive effects of color, texture, form, etc. The intent is to bring out the ideal or “inner nature” of the plant or garden elements (rocks, water) to help one see the spirit within. These values are not unique to Japan—many such ideals are found in Native American traditions for instance—but are perhaps most effectively applied to garden design in the Japanese culture.



Photo Frank Robinson

▲ A simple stone basin with a delicate water element supplied by the bamboo pipe. Spring is highlighted here with the container of iris—a beautiful moment in the garden.

Gardens in Japan challenge the definition of the traditional garden in the Western mind. Our perception of “a garden” involves a given plot of land, cultivated in some way, with a collection of plants with some purpose in mind. At what point does the act of gardening, no matter how constrained, create and define a garden? A container with a single plant intensely cultivated? A single row of bamboo carefully coifed and pruned to resemble a pompommed poodle? A small corner of land adorned with a plant and a rock, and perhaps a lantern? Is a bonsai a garden? How about an espaliered pear tree? Is a garden a critical mass, or a state of mind for its creator or participant?

The three photos above show examples of focal elements that create “beautiful moments” in the garden.

Garden spaces in Japan are often small. It has been a crowded land for centuries. The limit of geographic space forced creativity in garden design, careful selection of plants to be used for maximum effect, and a refined sense of innuendo and suggestion. Our Western traditions have been different. Gardens were at first, in Western Europe, utilitarian collections of medicinal herbs cultivated at monasteries. They later became private domains of the wealthy who collected exotica from around the globe through European exploration and colonization. Design became formal, expansive, and complex, as seen in the Italian, Dutch and French traditions. Gardens were “plant rich” and “object rich”—meant to dazzle and impress, places to entertain, places of stimulation, and places to experience the fullness of life. Yes, there were cottage gardens and potagers, but the defini-

tive ethos of European gardens was that of the royals and the financially successful.

We have continued those traditions in America, even in our breeding efforts. Although much of our genetic management was initialized to find plants that were disease resistant and climate adaptive, much of our modern efforts focuses on the bigger, better, and most unique plant able to be created—the Burpee white marigold or the elusive blue rose.

The contrast then is one of stimulation versus contemplation. I do not wish to be misunderstood to say that these positions cannot be reversed. There are “object rich” gardens in Japan, and restraint found in Western gardens. These are, however, the exceptions not the rules.

We can find the “experience” of the Japanese garden here at home. It most often occurs in nature—at mountain tops, in redwood forests, in pine groves, and in beautiful blooming meadows. Here there is a “oneness” and a sense of awe. These perhaps best describe the goal of “simplicity.” I believe there is a longer tradition of experimentation with minimalism and the capturing the essence of nature in the Japanese tradition.

Some techniques which I find to be consistently used in successful design of gardens in Japan are included in the following list. Some simple analysis of your garden might help you to evolve your garden toward one of greater simplicity, increased pleasure, and deeper satisfaction.

- (1) Restrain the plant palette. Use only a few species of plants in one garden; repeat the same plant, and use plants with strong design impact. If you are an azalean, your plant of choice is already known for the backbone of your garden. Now choose only those plants which will enhance and complement the azalea scheme.

▼ Simple compositions show a restrained plant palette, yet convey such beauty and harmony.



Photo Frank Robinson



(2) Unify the garden through repetition of form and materials. There is a unity of experience through consistent use of plant types, rocks, ground covers, water, structural elements, etc., which define the spirit of the garden. Is your garden one of tall, upright tree trunks? If so, attempt to maximize the impact by emphasizing this attribute. Is yours a shady garden? Tie it all together with a ground cover of uniform color

and texture—e.g., the moss garden at Saihoji. Keep your paving materials consistent. Use all rounded, soft rock forms, or all jagged, rough forms.

(3) Introduce elements which guide one through the garden both physically and visually—pathways, walks, fencing, edging materials, hedges. The most commonly used tools of this category are



Photo Frank Robinson

▲ ▼ The walls and fences are an important element of the composition - as backdrop, additional color and texture.



Photo Frank Robinson

▲ ▼ The use of moss as a surface can unify a garden as well as create a sense of calm and reverence. Note the play of light and the various colors that emerge.



Photo Frank Robinson



Photo Frank Robinson





Photo Frank Robinson

▲ Sequence and rhythm are created by the repetitive use of posts, the small trees and rock. The small rock wall on the right and the moss mound on the left frame the passageway. The experience of traversing the path is energized by the elements which guide you to the end.

walkways and small knee-high fencing along them, both of which display a phenomenal range of creativity and use of varied natural and man-made materials.

- (4) Replicate and enhance natural elements throughout the garden, creating harmony and rhythm. These include pruning to emphasize the structure of trees; shearing of plants to mimic significant rocks in the landscape; use of rocks to represent waterfalls or waterways; the strategic placement of plants to maximize their impact on the experience of the garden; attention to the elements of texture, color and form; focusing the visitor's attention on the detail of a particular element within the whole of the garden (the specimen tree or shrub).

- (5) Gateways mark the transition into a garden. They can be as simple as a few branches, or elaborately built with great artistry and substantial doors. Their purpose is to define the inner



Photo Frank Robinson

▲ The simple palette of the path and the plantings complement the decorative architecture, yet the specimen plants stand out in the landscape. The paving pattern brings you to the focal point of the pine, and then redirects you to the left to the destination of the entry gate. No signage needed!

- ▼ Repetition of the rounded forms of the azaleas and other shrubs contrast with the more jagged rocks. This place always makes the author think of an audience of people on the hillside looking down on the raked gravel and the elegant single "mountain" rock below, which is such a dominant feature in this landscape.



Photo Frank Robinson





Photo Frank Robinson

▲ The pure form of the tree, its branch structure and its roots, become sculpture in the garden. The rocks and simple plants at its base anchor it, and in some ways “befriend” it—like small creatures that might be under the canopy for shade and protection.

space from that outside—the sacrosanct from the ordinary, that with purpose and intent from that without.

- (6) Walls are also an important part of the garden. They define and enclose the space of the garden, providing in many cases a sense of intimacy. They also serve as a stopping point for the mind and the eye. Walls are usually quite substantial, with three main parts. The lower foundation is often made of natural rock. The main face is made of a wide variety of materials, from mud, to stucco, to glazed tile. Sometimes two facing materials will be used in combination. The roof is often made of tiles, which protects the facing materials, but also completes this substantial enclosure.

- (7) Bridges are designed in great variety. They are functional additions to assist one in crossing water, or suggested water. However, the most important function of the bridge is to enhance the journey through the garden, to take one be-



Photo Frank Robinson

▲ Gates are important demarcations of transition. Once you pass through, you are in a different reality. They greet you as you arrive, but they also lead you into a different realm.

▼ This is the famous Zen rock and gravel garden at Ryoanji. It is abstract and intended to challenge the mind, as well as to clear it. The internal structure of the wall can be seen through the clay surface. Together they provide line, color and texture that are equally important to the garden design and experience. Note the simple stone base, the face of the wall, and the cap (which here is made from *Cryptomeria* bark). Most all garden walls have these three elements.



Photo Frank Robinson





Photo Frank Robinson

▲ Bridges unite different parts of a garden while guiding and accentuating the journey you are invited to take.

▼ The gardens at Nijo Castle, the Kyoto base for the Tokugawa Shoguns. Rock was used extensively to demonstrate the absolute power of the Shogun. It is a statement of unquestionable strength.



Photo Frank Robinson

yond the current location, and to punctuate the experience. Bridges also often focus one's attention on a specific element of the garden, or provide a new and dramatic view of the garden as a whole.

- (8) The garden is a communication. It tells who you are. Symbolism is replete in Japanese gardens. Some reflects cultural values and ancient beliefs—tortoise and crane islands, bamboo, pine and plums are signs of longevity, good luck and courage. In many gardens there is a deeper meaning. Examples include the abstract, meditative stone garden at Ryoanji. The bold and brash rock garden created at Nijo Castle in Kyoto was created by Tokugawa as an expression of his powerful political control of the nation. The tea garden is a total separation from the real world, where one becomes totally focused on the immediate, striving for total involvement with the process of tea, and the beauty of the artifacts assembled to make it, in full equality

with other guests. What is it you want your garden to express to its visitor?

If you carefully evaluate your garden, using the criteria discussed, you may find there are opportunities for refinement. You may find your garden can become more peaceful, more inviting, more evocative, and more focused, and that the satisfaction you gain from it multiplies many times over. It is worth a little mental exercise the next time you take a break. Give it a try!

*Frank Robinson is the former Executive Director of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens in Richmond, Virginia. He is the former Executive Director of the American Horticultural Society. He has a degree in Japanese studies and has spent time in Japan.*

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