

Chapter News



Alabamense Chapter

John Torbert, President

The Alabamense Chapter had a series of “mini-tours” throughout the state in April. Several members hosted visits to their homes and gardens and to the D.E. Davis Arboretum at Auburn University giving members the opportunity to visit and see azaleas and other plants during a time when COVID prevented large gatherings.

The Alabamense Chapter cooperated with the Alabama Extension Service and the D.E. Davis Arboretum to develop a 4-part spring series of Zoom workshops: “All-About-Azaleas.” Part

Alabamense Chapter members were glad to help PhD student Sam Pryor from University of FL find *R. prunifolium* in bloom near Hallawakee Creek for her pollinator research..



1 explained the basics of evergreen and native azaleas; Part 2 focused on the planting and maintenance of azaleas; Part 3 was about azalea propagation; and, Part 4 was about pests and diseases. Recordings of all the talks given during these workshops can be viewed at: <https://auburn.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Sessions/List.aspx?folderID=0c714457-dd25-4847-a385-acf700ffbd79>.

After a flush of activity in the spring, azalea activity was relatively slow in the summer. One of the prettiest bloomers in August in east Alabama was the *Rhododendron prunifolium*. (pictured left). Member Samantha Pryor (a PhD candidate at the University of Florida) is conducting research on native azalea pollinators. One of our members (Monica Williams) has located for her some wild *R. alabamense*, *R. viscosum*, and *R. austrinum* to work on near Albany, GA, and Patrick Thompson has found her some wild *R. prunifolium* in Lee Co., AL. Our chapter’s Facebook page has been a very useful public outreach tool for us and helps recruit new members. Check it out at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/188160321289063>.

Northern Virginia Chapter

Rick Bauer, President

Things are starting to get back to normal with the Northern Virginia Chapter after the COVID restrictions of 2020. We have continued our support of Jenkins Arboretum by providing them Satsuki azaleas to extend their growing season. This is in addition to the Holly Springs azaleas we delivered last year for their Legacy Garden. On June 18, Paul and Carolyn Beck delivered 150 Satsukis to Jenkins.

In mid-June, several chapter members joined with other society members and representatives of arboreta in Pennsylvania and Delaware on the annual Smoky Mountain hikes. While we were a little early for the *Rhododendron catawbiense* rhododendron, the native azaleas, including a large number of *R. calendulaceum* were in full bloom. They were most spectacular on Roan Mountain and Hooper Bald.

We held our first in person indoor meeting on July 11. It was our annual cutting and plant exchange. We had a good turnout and we were



Pictured from left to right, Northern Virginia Chapter members Tommy Victor, Nicki Anchor, Jake Summers and Paul Beck after offloading the Satsukis at Jenkins Arboretum. Photo by Carolyn Beck.

happy to welcome past president Barbara Kirkwood and her husband John back to the area after three years in Australia. We had a great selection of cuttings and with the large number of plants (primarily azaleas—see photo below), each attendee had the opportunity to leave with a car full of plants. In addition to the exchange, chapter president Rick Bauer presented a slide show on the recent Smoky Mountain hikes. It was great to catch up with old friends.



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