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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Our Society directors in Montreal and also in Halifax have expressed their disappointment at the slowness in regional development, and rightly so. Your Bulletin editors are keenly aware of our present weakness in this respect. The Society must be made to function for the equal benefit of all its members or its expressed objective of being an all Canadian Society will not be achieved.

Other Societies have learned that the only way to equate geographical distances is to develop regional autonomous units. There should be no bar to steps being taken immediately to facilitate such group organizations within our Society. Of all the areas in central and eastern Canada where rhododendrons and azaleas can be grown and enjoyed, Nova Scotia has the happiest conditions. A moist "sea climate" and naturally acid soil provide the two most important considerations other than latitude. Nova Scotians could lead the way, with their own officers and annual programme. When this is achieved Ottawa and Montreal would doubtless follow to form another small but effective unit. There are of course economic and jurisdictional rules that would have to be worked out in fairness to all concerned. For example, the securing of a fund adequate for the printing of the bulletin would be a necessity.

There is an old English saying 'where there is a will there is a way'. Our directors in various parts of Canada are asked to give the matter earnest thought. The necessary perspective to bring about a happy solution to this problem cannot be provided by Southern Ontario alone. In fact it is the reverse. This impetus must come from those who will benefit most from the localized activities in the various regions across our country.

OUR FRONT COVER

Rhododendron vaseyi ‘White Find’ is an albino variant of the pale pink native American species. It was first introduced by La Bars Rhododendron Nursery. This photo was taken of a plant sent to the Editor years ago by Mr. David Leach, author of “Rhododendrons of the World”. Though it propagates with difficulty it can be obtained from Warren Baldsiefen, Box 88, Bellevale, NY 10912.
Dr. E. Frank Palmer, our first Honorary President, who passed away on May 16th, 1973, in his 82nd year.
IN MEMORIAM  DR. EDMUND FRANK PALMER
L. Hancock  Mississauga, Ontario

It is with a great sense of loss that we record the passing of our Honorary President, Dr. E. Frank Palmer. Frank was one of nature’s gentlemen, a truly gentle personality whose philosophy and outlook on life greatly appealed to the writer who first met him when, as a young man, he addressed the Horticulture Club of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph. He was born in New Westminster, B.C. but his life’s work accrued to Ontario’s benefit.

Dr. Palmer was best known as the Director of the Vineland Experimental Station (now known as the Horticultural Research Institute of Ontario) from 1916 to 1956. Few people have filled a position of this nature so well and over such a long period of time. Under his direction the Station grew greatly in world-wide acceptance as a leading agricultural research institution. During his tenure of office the famous V prefix was used to designate new varieties of fruits and vegetables raised at the Station. Winston Churchill used the V sign for victory in war. Dr. Palmer and his associates used the same sign for the greater achievements and fruits of peace. Space will not allow of a recital of all his horticultural successes. He was a breeder of beautiful flowering plants as well as economic acquisitions. In raising new gladioli and lilies he was a master.

In 1948 he was awarded the richly deserved honorary doctor’s degree of L.L.D. by the University of Toronto as recognition of his work in horticulture and in 1956 he was awarded the Wilder Medal by the American Pomological Society for “outstanding service to horticulture”.

Nearer and dearer to the hearts of all members of the R.S. of C. is the fact that without his support we would not now have a thriving young Society. It is not generally known that Dr. and Mrs. Palmer lost their only son in the Second World War. Wishing to do something tangible in their son’s memory, they decided to set up a fund for research work to be done at the Horticultural Research Institute, Vineland, Ontario, particularly with the beautiful genus, Rhododendron. This brought Roy Forster from Kew Gardens, London, England, to work on the project; work which is now being continued by another of our members, Ken Begg. The result has been another remarkable floral development on the Institute grounds that, previous to the Palmers’ decision, was not even thought possible, and promising new varieties of rhododendrons have been added to an already imposing list of hybrids raised on this continent.

Goodbye Frank. We shall miss you sadly.
Many ornamental plants cannot be used in the Midwest due to lack of winter hardiness. Such was the fate of many deciduous azaleas until the University of Minnesota developed hardy plants from reciprocal crosses of *Rhododendron x kosterianum* and *Rhododendron roseum*. (Kosterianum is an artificial specific name referring to the Mollis hybrids as a collective group.) These plants have withstood midwinter temperatures to -35°F. in open field conditions and bloomed profusely the following spring in various shades of pink. However, until recently, difficulty in asexual propagation has prevented multiplication of desired plants.

**Materials, Methods, Results**

In experiments at the University of Minnesota, St. Paul, preliminary tests proved mist was unsuccessful, so cuttings were rooted in a plastic tent in a heavily shaded greenhouse cooled with a fan and pad system. The plastic tent was four-mil polyethylene fitted over 12-inch high sideboards. It was sealed with lath tacked over its edges. In addition, black polyethylene was suspended over the bench at a 45° angle to keep out afternoon sunlight. Cuttings were hand-syringed two or three times a day to prevent wilting.

Three different rooting media were used: Peat-perlite (1:1), peat-vermiculite (1:1) and peat-perlite-vermiculite (1:1:1). All media were steam-sterilized, treated with Terraclor (one tablespoon per gallon) and soaked with Peters Acid Grow fertilizer (21-7-7) at one tablespoon per gallon. To help prevent disease, cuttings were drenched in a solution of captan 50 percent wettable powder (two tablespoons per gallon), Wilt Pruf (five percent by volume) and Tween 20 (five percent by volume) and stored in a cooler until placed in the rooting medium.

Light intensity within the bench varied from 200 to 500 foot-candles. Temperatures of the media were measured by a Barber Coleman temperature recorder and ranged from 64 to 80°F. They were usually around 70°F. Medium pH was measured at 10-day intervals using Lamotte indicator solutions and standards.

Cuttings were rated on a scale of one to seven (fig. 2) when dug. Ratings corresponded to the following: (1) dead; (2) alive, but no callus formation; (3) callus; (4) one to five small roots; (5) more than five small roots, but no root ball; (6) root ball up to 1½ inches in diameter; and (7) root ball larger than 1½ inches in diameter. The total rating for an entire treatment was used when any statistical comparisons were made.
Drench Experiment

An experiment determined the effect of the fungicide drench, five different rooting compounds, and plastic tent versus mist as a means of propagation. For this experiment, 216 cuttings 3 to 4 inches long were taken June 13 from an F<sub>1</sub> population (designated U of M #66190). This was during the later stage of a growth flush when most of the lower leaves were fully expended but the terminal buds were not yet formed.

After 54 days in a 1:1:1 peat-perlite-vermiculite medium, cuttings from the plastic tent had rooted significantly better than those under mist. Salt buildup under mist during rooting was enough to cause an overall browning and brittleness of the leaves which then abscised. The plants died even when rooted.

Drenching the cuttings with the fungicide solution had no apparent effect on cutting performance. All five rooting compounds produced better results than the nontreated checks, with Germain—talc consisting of equal parts of 4 percent indolebutyric acid (IBA) and 4X Cutsstart with 1/16 Phygon by volume—and Hormodin #3, the most consistent promoters under all three conditions.

Cutting Maturity

To determine the effect of cutting maturity on rooting, 40 cuttings were taken at 8-day intervals 6 different times, beginning May 22 and continuing to July 1, from the same plants of the F<sub>1</sub> population (U of M #66190).

Cuttings taken May 22 were succulent and in the elongation stage of a growth flush, with small, expanding leaves. Those taken July 1 were semi-hard and green to the base. Terminal buds were clearly evident.

The cuttings were treated with a 1-minute dip in 100 ppm IBA (all IBA solutions contained 5 percent ethanol). Half of them were placed in a medium of 1:1 peat-perlite and half in 1:1 peat-vermiculite. After 75 days, best rooting occurred with the younger cuttings, although the results were not consistent in both media. In most instances, cuttings rooted better in 1:1 peat-vermiculite than in 1:1 peat-perlite.

Terminal Bud Pinch

The effects on rooting of a terminal bud pinch, three hormones, captan and two different media were tested. One hundred and eighty softwood cuttings were used with fully expanded leaves taken June 5 from the F<sub>1</sub> population (U of M #66192). The four treatments, plus an untreated check, were duplicated with pinched and unpinched cuttings in media of 1:1 peat-perlite and 1:1:1 peat-perlite-vermiculite.
A one-minute dip in 100 ppm IBA, containing 5 percent dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO), gave significantly better results than the untreated cuttings. Captan significantly inhibited rooting compared to controls. A 1:1:1 peat-perlite-vermiculite medium caused some inhibition of rooting compared to 1:1 peat-perlite, while unpinched cuttings rooted better than pinched cuttings in the same medium.

Smaller individual experiments involving a total of more than 1,000 cuttings from different stock plants were also conducted. Rooting percentages ranged from 70 to 100 with an average success of 87 percent. Effects of rooting compounds varied, indicating interactions with plants of different parentage.

**Discussion**

In areas where hard water prevents successful mist propagation of deciduous azaleas, a plastic tent gives excellent results. A cool area is essential. No direct sunlight can be allowed to strike the plastic enclosure at any time, or excessive heat buildup under the plastic can damage cuttings.

Rooting compounds gave inconsistent results in these experiments. Timing did not seem to be critical, but best results can be expected from younger cuttings taken after the first 2 to 3 weeks of growth when shoots are 3 to 4 inches long with expanding or nearly expanded leaves. In addition, taking cuttings earlier in the spring or summer allows more time for newly rooted plants to produce new shoots before going dormant in the fall. This greatly increases the chances of buds breaking dormancy the following spring.

In the interest of producing better-branched plants, terminal bud removal is not recommended. Typically, there are several vegetative buds developed at the apex by the time a cutting is rooted. Most of these buds can be induced to develop shoots if the first ones to break are pruned after 3 or 4 new leaves are produced. Pinching a cutting tends to limit the new shoots to the one or two lateral buds that develop first.

Cuttings taken in mid-May were potted by mid-July and had 6 to 8 inches of new growth by the end of August. Beginning at the end of July, the photoperiod was extended to last from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. using incandescent lights 3 feet apart and suspended 2½ feet above the plants. Plants were then hardened off in cold frames in September or kept under lights to serve as a source of fall cuttings. Initial results indicate that it is possible to take 1 or 2 successive crops of cuttings from the young plants rooted during the summer with no ill effects to them. A rather large population of plants can be built up rapidly in this manner.
The Second Annual Rhododendron Show of the Rhododendron Society of Canada took place on Friday and Saturday the 1st and 2nd of June 1973 at the Fairview Mall, a very large shopping mall located at the north east corner of Sheppard Avenue East and Woodbine Avenue in north east Metropolitan Toronto.

The Fairview Corporation, after being contacted by Mrs. P. Waxer, one of the Show coordinators, kindly allowed the Society to use a large banquet room in the Mall free of charge. This room had a folding partition, so that it was possible to divide the room in two. It was possible to set up the flower show in one side of the room and the Judging to proceed while the Annual Meeting was in progress in the other half.

A very effective display of rhododendrons and azaleas was staged by Woodland Nurseries in time for public viewing at 6 p.m. on Friday 1st of June. Displays were also in place by this time from the Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Ontario, and the Horticultural Research Institute of Ontario, Vineland, Ontario. The ladies of the Garden Club of Toronto volunteered their services and designed very attractive flower arrangements using cut trusses and sprays of rhododendrons and azaleas. These were placed in columnar display cases and were on view in the upper level of the mall from Friday afternoon until the close of the Show on Saturday. A sign was placed near them advertising our Show. Mrs. Hugh Robertson and Mrs. Brisby of the Garden Club organized their very welcome contribution.

The Royal Botanical Gardens supplied the flower containers and also the cedar cuttings for stabilizing the entries displayed in these containers. Mr. Ray Halward, from the RBG, was responsible for this very important detail.

Entries were set up and ready for Judging slightly after the 10:30 a.m. deadline on Saturday June 1st. Judging took place until 12 noon, after which the Show was open to the public until 5:30 p.m. A special mention should be made of the efforts of Mrs. Mary Cohoe, one of the coordinators. Every time there is a show in which the Society is involved, Mary is there helping set up, carrying plants, helping to dismantle and generally being helpful. Her contribution is greatly appreciated by the exhibitors.

Dr. R. J. Hilton was coordinator of the Judging. The Judges were: Mr. K. Begg, Mrs. B. Laking, Dr. L. Laking, Captain R. M. Steele and Professor J. C. Taylor. The results of the Judging were sent out to all members as part of the
August 31 Newsletter. The Trophy Winners were:

**Best Species Award:**
- A. Tadeson — *R. japonicum*

**E. Frank Palmer Award for Best Canadian Hardy Origination:**
- L. Hancock — (*R. smirnowii x R. thompsoni*) x ‘Dr. Dresselhuys’

**John E. Brent Award for Best in Show:**
- A. W. Smith — ‘Mrs. Furnival’

After the Annual Meeting a field trip was available for all Members to view the rhododendron plantings at Woodland Nurseries, Mississauga, Ontario. Hosts Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Hancock and their daughter Marjorie Van Alstyne greeted the Members and were very helpful answering questions and showing the visitors the very fine rhododendrons and azaleas, many at their peak of bloom. The Members who made this trip were newly inspired to greater efforts in the growing and breeding of their favourite genus.

The day was warm and sunny and Members were observed snapping away with their cameras. Refreshments were served and many expressions of appreciation were directed toward Mr. and Mrs. Hancock for their fine hospitality. It is safe to say that the Members were well satisfied with our Second Annual Show.
KENTVILLE RESEARCH STATION INTRODUCES FOUR NEW RHODODENDRONS
D. L. Craig Kentville, Nova Scotia

Winter temperatures in Nova Scotia frequently fluctuate from below 0°F to above freezing in a 24-hour period. Because of this, the range of rhododendrons that could be grown in the province was restricted to the *catawbiense* 'ironclad' hybrids. Many of these hardy hybrids are now growing in Nova Scotia gardens. Researchers at the Canada Department of Agriculture Research Station, Kentville, N.S. thought that it would be desirable to be able to grow many different types of rhododendrons in this area, so we initiated a breeding program in 1956. Since then, we have evaluated many species and cultivars and grown many thousand of seedlings: Four selections from crosses made during the first few years of this breeding program have proven reliable at Kentville, and are sufficiently different from the 'ironclads' to warrant release. These have been named Acadia, Evangeline, Gabriel and Grand Pré. The names have historical significance for this area. The Grand Pré National Park, which is 10 miles east of Kentville, was the setting for Longfellow's poem "Evangeline", in which the principal characters were two Acadians, Evangeline and Gabriel.

In rating these 4 new cultivars, we think that Evangeline should be the most successful. It is completely reliable at Kentville, and the large delicate pink flowers are pleasantly scented, which is a real bonus. Its principal fault is its eventual size. After 24 years it should be about 8 feet high. This will limit its usefulness for modern home landscaping.

Gabriel is also very hardy and semi-compact. It has a tendency to be biennial in its flowering habit. One year it will be completely covered with bloom, the next year its bloom will be rather scattered.

Acadia was selected because it is the only *fortunei* type we have grown that has proven both hardy and attractive. The large scented pink flowers have throats that are distinctly flecked 'Oxblood'. Acadia is an upright plant with an open type of growth. The foliage is a distinctive light green.

Grand Pré may be the least likely to succeed, in that it is only hardy to -10°F. It was selected because the loose trusses of bell-shaped flowers are unique as well as attractive. The plant is compact, low growing and early flowering. If given some winter protection, Grand Pré should prove of value in the milder parts of the province.

Full descriptions of these new cultivars are as follows:

**Acadia**

**Parentage.** *Rhododendron fortunei* Lindley (open-pollinated). Selected from 38 seedlings produced in 1956 from seed secured from F. W. Schumacker, Sandwich, Massachusetts.

**Plant Type.** Open-type growth habit; 80 cm high, 120 cm wide, November 1972.
Leaves. Light green; outline oblanceolate to elliptical; apex obtuse to cuspidate; base obtuse; 14 cm long, 5 cm wide.

Flowers. Pleasantly scented; borne in compact trusses well above foliage; petals, filament, and style Dawn Pink (523/2 R.H.S. Color Chart). Throat of florets completely flecked Oxblood (00823/3 R.H.S. Color Chart).

Hardiness. Flower buds and foliage hardy to at least -27 C (-17 F).

Evangeline

Parentage. *R. fortunei* x *R. smirnowii*. One of seven seedlings sent to Kentville in 1958 by M. L. Hancock, Mississauga, Ontario.

Plant Type. Open-type growth habit; 200 cm high, 180 cm wide, November 1972.

Leaves. Dark green, outline oblong; apex acute; base obtuse; 16 cm long, 6 cm wide.

Flowers. Large, pleasantly scented, borne in large trusses above the foliage. Flower buds Rose Opal (022 R.H.S. Color Chart). Open florets, filaments, and style white; upper petal flecked olive-brown; frilled petal edges Neyron Rose (623/3 R.H.S. Color Chart).

Hardiness. Flower buds and foliage hardy to at least -27 C (-17 F).

Gabriel


Plant Type. Semi-compact growth habit; 80 cm high, 120 cm wide, November 1972.

Leaves. Medium green; outline elliptical to oblong; apex obtuse; base acute; 15 cm long, 5 cm wide.


Hardiness. Flowers and foliage hardy to at least -27 C (-17 F).

Grand Pré

PLANT TYPE. Compact, 65 cm high, 100 cm wide, November 1972.

LEAVES. Dark green; outline elliptical; apex truncate to cuspidate; base oblique to cordate; 8 cm long, 4 cm wide.

FLOWERS. Bell-shaped in loose clusters held above the foliage; petals, filaments, and style Phlox Pink (625/3 R.H.S. Color Chart).

HARDINESS. Flower bud hardy to -23 C (-10 F).

Propagation and Availability
The Kentville Research Station does not propagate nursery stock for sale. An arrangement has been made with the Blomidon Nursery, Greenwich, Kings Co., N.S., for the propagation and distribution of these new cultivars. The owner of the Blomidon Nursery, G. S. Swain, was on the staff of the Kentville Research Station prior to his resignation in 1968. Those interested in securing these new cultivars are requested to contact Mr. Swain.

BATTING THE ELEMENTS
W. H. Gilbert  Lakefield, Quebec

My property is a steep bank facing a lake, which bank faces southeast, situated 1200 feet above sea level on the height of land in my area. Being in the snow belt I am open to most vicious weather and plagued with ice storms in late fall before sufficient snow cover or in early spring after some thawing has removed the top snow cover. I have covered all my rhododendrons to the best of my ability by placing snowfence around them and mulching with wood chips. More complete cover is prohibitive as to cost as I have about seventy plants. After four or five years growth they now stand between three and six feet tall which in itself prohibits individual protection.

I have not been very happy with my results with the rhododendrons but blame the poor showing on these very severe conditions. Two years ago I moved about twenty plants to the west side of the bank and this appeared to do some good as they were replanted in a massive group and backed by a growth of trees. These showed fair blooms this year but not as much as I feel that I should enjoy. I also find that those bushes on the east side of my bank do better both in growth and bloom than the others. I can only conclude that this is because that side is protected by a large growth of trees, mostly maple, that extend east from the line of my garden which gives protection from the vicious east winds. These plants,
about fifteen of them, produced a satisfactory number of blooms and satisfactory
growth. The balance are scattered about the garden in two's and three's and are
quite open and although the growth is acceptable, the blooms are not as plentiful
as they should be. Only one plant was partially burned back from wind this year
and that was fully exposed.

After comparing results of the three groups I have come to the conclusion that
those on the open bank must be moved. I will move some to the east side so that
they enjoy the natural protection of the trees supplemented by my normal winter
coverage. I will move about six or eight to the back of my property which is
600 or 700 feet from the lake in a thinly wooded area where the wind from the
lake will be dispersed by a low hill and broken by the trees. The snow coverage
will be better as, by breaking the wind, it will not be blown away and the buds
will not be exposed until the natural thaw in the spring. I am quite satisfied with
the new growth each year and am certain that my major problem is the dehy-
dration of the buds from the wind. By moving these plants I should be able to
compare results from the four locations and these results should show in two
years at the most.

My azaleas are no problem. They are on the hillside facing the lake and enjoy
the same location as the rhododendrons which are in the open. They appear to
be hardier than the rhododendrons as they have the same winter cover and face
the same climatic conditions. They are heavy with blooms each year and put on
good growth. My only future problem with them will be pruning as they also
are becoming quite large.

It must be realized that in order to grow rhododendrons a complete and thorough
survey of conditions should be made. This is particularly so with regard to wind
and ice, which in my estimation are the two worst culprits. Every advantage
should be taken of natural cover such as trees. If possible do not plant near large
bodies of open water that will freeze in the winter, where east winds in particular
will dehydrate the buds or burn the plant tips. I have found that the northeast,
east and southeast winds in winter blowing across an icebound lake will play
havoc with the best cover. Most of the blooms on the plants on the open bank
were on the opposite side of the plant from the lake; those buds on the lake side
were dehydrated and did not bloom. I would suggest planting near walls or other
windbreaks or near natural cover, opposite the prevailing wind.

I am convinced after six or seven years study, that the major consideration in
growing rhododendrons in this northern belt is wind. If some thought is given to
protection from the icy winter blasts to which we are subject the growing of this
stately shrub will be a source of satisfaction and pay untold dividends for the
effort.
LEPIDOTE RHODODENDRONS
Leslie Hancock  Mississauga, Ontario

In a previous Bulletin we were favoured with an article on *R. lapponicum* by Dr. J. B. Brueckner. This little plant species, so widely spread in sub-Arctic regions, grows and multiplies farther north than any other rhododendron. *R. lapponicum* is a scaly leaved (lepidote) rhododendron and Dr. Brueckner suggests that it could be the forerunner of a much hardier race of dwarf rhododendrons for our northern gardens.

Lepidote rhododendrons are so different morphologically from our large smooth leaved rhododendrons (elepidote) as to be almost a separate genus. The tiny microscopic scales are found mostly on the underside of the leaves, but also on the upper surfaces and sometimes even on the branches and flower parts. They are wonderful adaptive organisms that enable the plant to resist drought and exposure to strong sunshine. In this respect lepidote rhododendrons are much more suited to our continental climate than the shade loving large smooth leaved species. In the book "The Species of Rhododendrons", published by the Rhododendron Society of Britain in 1930, editor J. B. Stevenson chronicles 21 Series of lepidote rhododendrons, composed of 290 species in all. Most of these plant forms are found in the highlands of eastern Tibet and western China above the tree line of the Himalayan rain forests, at elevations from 12,000 to 18,000 feet. On the treeless plains and high mountain sides they hug the ground in vast carpets, much as expanses of heather are found in the moors and mountains of Europe. The plant explorer Kingdon Ward, said that when in bloom they clothe the hills with vast carpets of living colour.

Curiously, in England more than anywhere else, plant explorers have brought these denizens of the high mountains to live in the denser atmosphere of the northland and grow and flower quite satisfactorily. In April, 1952 at Kew Gardens, England, we saw a magnificent display of these abundantly flowering plants. Blends of soft pink, red, white and yellow covered a low bank at St. Anne's Cottage. Profoundly impressed, it has been my wish ever since to see what can be done to assemble in southern Ontario as comprehensive a collection of the hardier species and hybrids as can be grown satisfactorily here.

After many failures, we have come to the conclusion that these plants must be given a site that is reasonably comparable to their native habitat. We have chosen for the purpose a fairly large rock garden area built into a bank facing east. The plants are in full sunshine most of the day, but receive only slanted light from the south and west. Compared to previous plantings in shady woodland spots, the plants are already responding much better.
Ramapo (raiser Guy Nearing) A popular time tested dwarf rhododendron, is a low spreading form bearing rich blue-purple flowers in May.

Our incomplete collection of successful forms so far contains the following:

Species  R.R. carolinianum, carolinianum album, dauricum, ferugineum, hippochaeoides, hirsutum, mucronulatum, rubiginosum.

Hybrids  P.J.M., Purple Gem, Ramapo, Wilsoni, Punctatum, Praecox, Dora Amateis, carolinianum x impeditum, carolinianum x Blue Diamond, carolinianum x racemosum, Blue Tit, Windbeam, Pioneer, carolinianum x fastigiatum (Kentville).

There is an added dividend that comes with lepidotes — they are mostly early flowering, and their free flowering nature is similar to azaleas. A happy, well grown plant is frequently completely covered in bloom. The plant habit is compact and mature plants are smaller than the big leaved rhodos, an asset for today's smaller gardens.

In the United States G. Nearing has worked for many years on the improvement of lepidote rhododendrons.

We shall be happy at any time to exchange with others who are building up or wish to build up a collection of these charming plants.
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
Ken Begg  Horticultural Research Institute of Ontario, Vineland Station, Ont.

Many questions were asked at our second annual flower show. For those interested in why your Rhododendron entry lost or took a 2nd or 3rd place, please take note — (1) when choosing a truss, avoid any minor flaws such as one floret turning brown, injured or bruised. (2) check and make sure all the florets have developed as in some trusses, one or two florets may never form. (3) watch out for multiple terminals and auxiliary buds. The rules for all but the scaly leaved Rhododendrons state that it must be a single truss. This is confusing, since it appears to be a single stem but if you look closely, it may consist of two small stems to form a flower truss.

Q. What varieties of Rhododendrons and Azaleas can be used for bonsai?
A. Mrs. Kenzie who has worked for many years with bonsai, visited the station and suggests using the small leaved azaleas such as *Rh. kiusianum* and *Rh. obtusum amoenum* for anyone interested in starting in this field. The small leaved Vineland cultivar introduced by Roy Forster "Veesprit" (*impeditum x racemosum*) is also an excellent plant for bonsai. Roy has used this plant and the sister seedlings a few years ago. Maybe Roy could elaborate in a future article his experience with Rhododendrons and bonsai and we hope to hear soon from our new friend Mrs. Kenzie.

Q. I would like to grow greenhouse azaleas for the Christmas pot plant trade. What varieties should I buy for forcing? Mike Mooney.

Numerous varieties are available for greenhouse forcing, but the cost of growing these tender plants is very high. With the increasing cost to heat a greenhouse, the azalea grower is faced with sad financial results.

The beauty of these plants regardless of the price, create a demand that must be filled. I have two suggestions —

(1) grow the following varieties as usual — Christmas Cheer, Fashion, Sweetheart Supreme Pink, Dorothy Gish, Satellite and Coral Bell.

(2) grow a few of the hardy evergreen azaleas and carry them through the winter in a plastic house with no heat. I have forced *Hino Crimson, Rosebud, Stewartstonian* and *Delware Valley White* using this technique. As you know, some of the hardier varieties become very leggy, thus apply phosphon as directed to overcome this problem. The big advantage to you is the avoided heat bill. The advantage to the consumer is that he can hold the plant in the house and then transfer it to the garden in the spring.

Mike, you are growing beautiful plants. Keep it up, and you will be two times rewarded.
REGIONAL NOTES

Nova Scotia  Captain R. M. Steele

Dr. Fraser Nicholson’s *Rhododendron taronense* bloomed in January (indoors), it has a delightful scent . . . Other Maddenii series rhododendrons include *R.R. dendricola, johnstoneanum, Fletcherianum*, and *maddenii* itself, as well as the hybrid ‘Fragrantissima’, bloomed throughout February and March.

Our first rhododendron to bloom out of doors was *R.dauricum* on 14 April. This is an all time record for us here. The first elepidote rhododendron to bloom was *R.chrysanthum* on the last day of April. This was the first time that any non-scaly leafer has bloomed this early . . . This was the finest bloom that I have ever seen of this species; a soft lovely pale yellow with florets held jauntily higher above the leaves than is usual.

After this burst of very early bloom the season reverted fairly quickly to the normal schedule. Rhododendron Sunday at Kentville was subjected to massive downpour of rain throughout the day. Even this did not deter some of the hardy fans, and late in the afternoon about four hundred visited their delightful and growing display.

At Boulderwood notes were made on the following bloomings . . . 31 species, 29 of our own hybrid crosses, and 51 other hybrids. It was a good blooming year. Although the winter had appeared to be very mild, quite a lot of winter damage was in evidence and there was no immediate explanation.

Professor Walter Ostrom grew specie seedlings under lights during the winter and now has the healthy young plants growing in a small nursery bed beside the rolling and sometimes roaring Atlantic Ocean.

The Kentville Research Station had some very interesting first bloom on a number of their hybrids this year and these will be referred to in more specific form in the next bulletin. Dr. Fraser Nicholson had a very fine and large *calophytum* hybrid, a mass of bloom on the 18th June. Dr. Robinson had a number of excellent first bloomings of crosses involving *R.yakusimanum*, ‘Crest’, ‘Boule de Neige’, ‘Prelude’ and an old red hybrid. One of these was a glistening white with very good texture; some were quite light clear yellows and others were vibrant pinks.

Luck seems to have turned her head on old Steele this season; sixty large rhododendrons were stolen from a cold area test site, plants that were ten years old and just due for their first blooming. Thirty-two of this group of plants were stolen last year . . . To add insult to injury, four young urchins (all under seven years of age) dumped over two thousand of this year’s hybrid seedlings into a fast running brook . . . nearly half of these were recovered the following day along the banks of the brook. These have been replanted BUT how does one know what is which?
Montreal  Professor J. Ronsley

Since at this time of the year the few rhododendrons and azaleas in Montreal are doing what they usually do during the summer, and since very little else has been happening here relevant to the Society, it may be useful to report on my recent trip to western Canada and a few contacts I made there which are, I think, of interest.

Perhaps the most important was my visit to Mr. Milton Wildfong at Silver Creek Gardens (32224 Dewdney-Trunk Road, R.R. 2, Mission, B.C.). Mr. Wildfong began the nursery with a partner only seven years ago, but has already compiled what must be the most extensive list of hybrid rhododendrons in Canada, and has an impressive list of deciduous azaleas and rhododendron species as well. The nursery itself is more like a garden than a nursery, occupying six acres of hilly land crossed by a rushing stream. Because of the newness of the whole operation the plants are not, for the most part, mature, but the setting is spectacular and it doesn't take much imagination to envision what the place will look like ten years from now. The plants are of very good quality and Mr. Wildfong is both personable and knowledgeable. His stock includes a surprisingly large number of hardy rhododendrons as well as the more tender ones. A major problem for Canadian rhododendron enthusiasts in the East is Canadian sources; it should be welcome news that we can add to Woodland Nurseries another excellent nursery specializing in rhododendrons, and willing to ship.

Another nursery visit was to Mr. and Mrs. C. Wellmeier of the C. & T. Azalea Nursery (16651 20th Avenue, Surrey, B.C.). The Wellmeiers specialize in evergreen azaleas — and have several of the hardier Gables — but are expanding their stock of deciduous ones. Unfortunately, they do not ship at this time, but they are particularly nice people and perhaps could be persuaded to do so in the future. C. & T., like Woodland and Silver Creek, could be extremely useful to the Society and to Canadian rhododendron and azalea enthusiasts generally. Since no one nursery can handle everything, the resources they supply would be supplemental to each other, and the range available for our garden would be greatly increased.

We also visited Mrs. Lydia Hill (formerly Stephen) at “The Glades” (see RSC Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1972), and were treated to her charming hospitality as well as to a visit to her garden. Only discolor and auriculatum were in bloom at the time, but these were terribly impressive, and, along with the rest of the garden — overwhelming even while green — caused us to be suitably frustrated at living in so absurd a climate as we do. But perhaps with the development of new hybrids, and with the increasing availability of the old ones, our envy of our western colleagues can be greatly diminished.
rhododendrons & azaleas at edwards gardens  Edwards Gardens is situated at the south west corner of Lawrence Avenue East and Leslie Street in Don Mills, a suburb of Metropolitan Toronto. It is at the approximate geographical centre of Metropolitan Toronto and is part of the Metropolitan Toronto Parks system.

The Civic Garden Centre, a building devoted to increasing the knowledge of horticulture of the general public, is situated near the entrance to the Gardens. Many horticultural societies use the facilities offered by the Centre. These include an auditorium and a very good library. Hopefully, an extension to the present building will be added in the not too distant future. No doubt the R.S.C. will, from time to time, use the Centre for national and regional functions.

About 20 years ago rhododendrons and azaleas were planted by Mr. Leslie Hancock on both sides of the stream (a tributary of the Don River) which runs through the valley bisecting the Gardens from north to south. These plants were largely neglected over the years — those on the east bank mostly dying out and those on the west bank growing to a height of over seven feet. As there is no extensive public collection of rhododendrons and azaleas in Metropolitan Toronto, and, as a great many of our members live in this area, it seems logical that the plants in Edwards Gardens could form a nucleus of a display and test garden connected with the local members of our Society. This could provide interest for our members and be educational for the general public.

During the winter of 1972-73 a suggestion was made to our popular Metropolitan Parks Commissioner Mr. T. W. (Tommy) Thompson. If the parks department would prepare ground adjacent to the successful planting on the west bank of the stream, members of our Society might present a collection of rhododendrons and azaleas to the Commission in the name of our Society to be planted in this ground.

With the cooperation of Mr. H. R. Hambly, Director of Operations and Maintenance, and Mr. O. Richter, Superintendent of Parks, both of the Metropolitan Toronto Parks Department, a site was selected just south of the existing planting. Meanwhile, an appeal was made to members in the Metropolitan Toronto area for support of the project. Several of our local members gave generous donations and plants were purchased from two nurseries in the area at substantial discounts. More azaleas were purchased than rhododendrons in order to balance the existing planting.
Mr. Dieter (Dick) Maier, the foreman at Edwards Gardens, and his staff prepared the new ground and made the actual planting. They were most cooperative. Mr. Maier is very interested in the project and accepted suggestions of placement with regard to colour, time of bloom, and habit of the plant material. Large azaleas were moved from among the existing tall rhododendrons and the gardeners were amazed at the ease of moving 6 foot plants. New converts to the cause were created on the spot. The plants are thriving and are budding well for next year's bloom. They are obviously in good hands.

Standing at the site, from time to time, when the plants were in bloom, it was very gratifying to hear the comments of the visitors to the Gardens. Many saw for the first time rhododendrons and azaleas growing in this area. After many conversations with these visitors, one felt the project to be worthwhile.

Hopefully, the planting will be extended again next year. For one thing, the existing rhododendrons are far too close together and need to be spread out. In some cases plants should be severely pruned to make them more compact. Incidentally, all plants were labelled as they came into bloom — the old labels having disappeared long ago. A plan of the planting is being prepared, one copy to be kept by the Society and others by the Gardens and the Civic Garden Centre.

We must again appeal to Mr. Thompson for another extension of the planting. This seems to be a successful project and, if the Commissioner agrees to more of the same, an appeal will again be made to our local members for support. In the meantime, visit the planting if you can and see for yourself the result of our combined efforts.

Contributors: A total of $176.00 was contributed to the planting fund. $167.00 has been spent on the project. Our thanks to the following members for their generosity: V. E. Boake, Misses A. and K. Clark, D. F. Compton, Mrs. A. L. Cooper, J. R. Dean, Dr. G. A. Fee, Mr. and Mrs. I. MacKenzie, Dr. R. B. Meiklejohn, Mrs. J. Pedoe, Mrs. J. R. M. Wilson.

Plant Material: K. Duncan — Hybrid azaleas, Acer palmatum linearilobum, Picea jezoensis, Sinarundinaria nitida (Bamboo), Primulas.

From Mr. and Mrs. H. Glasgow and Mr. and Mrs. R. Robinson (non-members) in memory of Mrs. Lucy Glasgow — 350 bulbs of Scilla campanulata Excelsior.
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