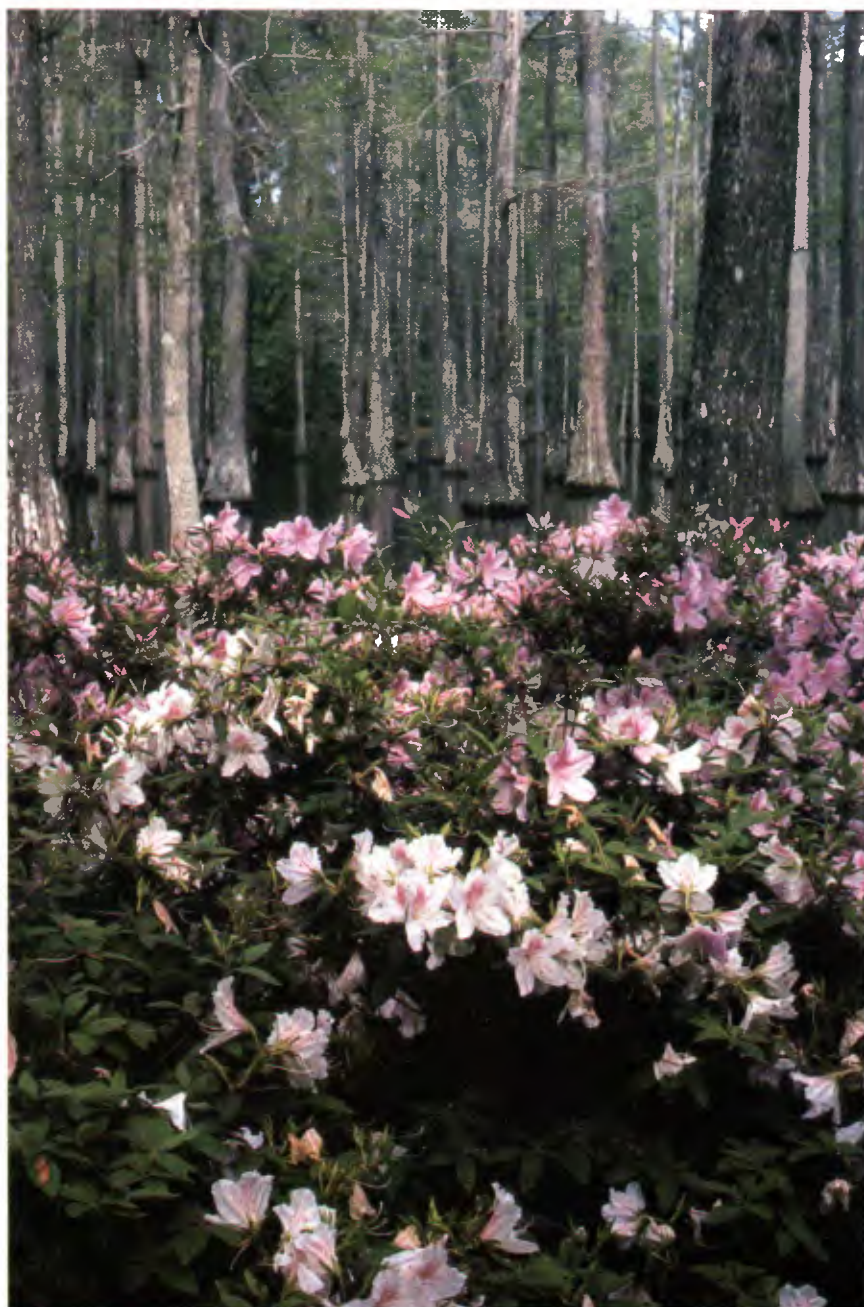


THE **A**zalea

Journal of the Azalea Society of America



**'Oh My' Is Pretty, But 'My-O'
Is 'Irresistible'**

What Are Those Spots?

**Expert Opinions:
And That's the Truth!**

**Azaleas of Reflection Riding
Arboretum and
Botanical Garden**



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

William F. Bode — Covington, Louisiana

In my last letter in the last issue of **THE AZALEAN**, a plan was put forward to help increase our membership. Very simple, one might even say simplistic. Hopefully you recall "A smile and a handshake." It works, and it worked for me. In a blatant plagiarism, "How do you measure success?" as applied to our situation of seeking members, "One contact at a time."

My wife's and my Christmas present to one another was a trip to visit children and grandchildren who live in Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia. On this meandering trip, I was able to talk to several past presidents of the Society about another matter. More importantly, I was able to visit North Carolina State's J.C. Raulston Arboretum at Raleigh. I looked forward to this visit in view of its relation to the Carla Hybrids and Dr. Richard Stadtherr. Two things stand out in my memory of this visit: 1) The welcome was wonderful, since the employees and docents talked willingly, even through a break, about

plants, people, organizations with a person they did not know from Adam. As one would expect, they were both knowledgeable and practical. 2) They told me they had not heard of the Azalea Society of America until three or four years ago, but they eagerly talked of their own azalea sale, held in the spring by the Gardeners of Wake County. This sale offers 12,000 to 15,000 plants from about 100 varieties. Are you as amazed as I was?

These good folks put me in touch with the president of Gardeners of Wake County, and we had a delightful and informative phone conversation. We decided that both would benefit from an exchange of information about our organizations. By the by, that garden club has over 300 members! All this potential for ASA from one contact! This will most certainly not solve our problem of under-recognition as a specialty plant society, but consider what 10 such contacts — or 100 contacts could do. How do you measure success? One contact at a time!

On the Cover

William C. Miller III gives us this amazing sight to be seen on tour during the Society's convention in Charleston, March 22-24. Here you see azaleas growing right on the edge of a cypress swamp at Cypress Gardens.

[Bob Stelloh provided me the following marvelous quote from 200 years ago, showing that discussion of when a new millenium starts is a long-term question.— Ed]

"We have uniformly rejected all letters and declined all discussion upon the question of when the present century ends, as it is one of the most absurd that can engage the public attention, and we are astonished to find it has been the subject of so much dispute, since it appears plain. The present century will not terminate till January 1, 1801, unless it can be made out that 99 are 100... It is a silly, childish discussion, and only exposes the want of brains of those who maintain a contrary opinion to that we have stated."

The [London] Times, 26 December 1799

Azalea Society of America

The Azalea Society of America, organized December 9, 1977 and incorporated in the District of Columbia, is an educational and scientific non-profit association devoted to the culture, propagation and appreciation of azaleas Subgenera *Tsutsusi* and *Pentanthera* of the genus *Rhododendron* in the Heath family (*Ericaceae*).

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Table of Contents

VOLUME 22 NUMBER 1 MARCH 2000

- 2 **President's Letter**
William F. Bode
- 4 **Calendar**
- 4 **Call for Articles**
- 5 **'Oh My' Is Very Pretty, But 'My-O' Is 'Irresistible'**
William C. Miller III
- 8 **What Are Those Spots?**
Bill Steele
- 10 **Expert Opinions: And That's the Truth!**
Barry L. Sperling
- 12 **To Label or Not To Label**
James O. Thornton
- Azalea Gardens**
- 13 **Azaleas of Reflection Riding Arboretum and Botanical Garden**
J.E. Schild, Jr.
- 15 **Landon Azalea Festival Marks 47th Year**
Ellen Marks
- Society News**
- 16 **Donations to the Society**
Bob Stelloh
- 16 **Society and Azalea Information Online**
- 17 **Chapter News**
- 18 **1999 Sources and Uses of Funds**
Bob Stelloh
- 19 **New Members**
- 20 **In Memory**
Dr. John Allen Smith
Maarten van der Giessen
- 21 **Azalea Mart**

Call for Articles

Barbara Stump – Nacogdoches, Texas

As we head into the year 2000 and complete the millennium, I need your articles for future issues of **THE AZALEAN**. Take a few minutes to look around in your own neighborhood, or the area that your chapter serves, to see the wealth of sales, garden tours, and botanic gardens that feature azaleas. Americans love azaleas, and as a Society we certainly do. Remember that **THE AZALEAN** provides you with a forum for sharing information about azaleas, their care and culture, and places where you can see them in the landscape.

From time to time, as your editor, I can ask academic researchers for articles, but our primary source of information is still you, the Society's members. Every time you find a new "favorite spot" to visit azaleas, every time you see a neighbor's landscape that is particularly successful in incorporating azaleas, every time you have a question or a solution to a care and culture issue, remember it can go right into **THE AZALEAN** and benefit all of the Society's members.

Looking back at 1999, you can see that as a Society we are all interested in new cultivars of both the evergreen and deciduous azaleas. We know many of you are doing your own hybridizing and hav-

ing success. Why not send me some descriptions and photographs so others can learn about your cutting-edge work? Joe Schild's article on the Philp Garden at Reflection Riding Arboretum and Botanic Garden is just the most recent azalea garden I've heard of that hasn't already been featured in **THE AZALEAN**. But there are many others just beginning, I am sure. If you know of new projects now under way, let me know. Bill Steele's article really tells about the lengths to which nurserymen will go to try to help out their loyal customers, aided by a host of equally helpful ASA members and university researchers. Finally, Jim Thornton's hints on labeling show there is always a place in gardening, and in **THE AZALEAN**, for trying, trying again, and keeping a sense of humor.

The bottom line here is that **THE AZALEAN** is really a record of what you ASA members send in; it shows how you all as a group continue to learn more about azaleas. Send me your in-the-ground experiences so I can continue to provide a high quality journal.

Also, remember to voice your opinion about which article in 1999 was the best article in **THE AZALEAN**, by marking

up the ballot on the wrapper and mailing it in to me by March 20. We will be awarding the prize for Best Article at the convention in Charleston.

Here are a few notes on some basics about article submission and illustrations. However, I am flexible if given enough lead-time to work with you. If you have any ideas for new articles or features, please send these along to me as well.

•**Length:** 1500 words (up to six typed pages) for feature articles, shorter as needed for others.

•**Form:** Typed originals or photocopies.

•**Ideal form:** Word-processed diskette with accompanying hard copy, or sent via e-mail as an attachment to bstump@inu.net. Handwritten submissions are accepted. Send hard copies of all tables.

•**Illustrations:** Digital images are ideal, also sent via e-mail, although slides and prints can be used. Ink drawings or colored drawings can be used, as well.

Deadlines:

March Issue: January 1
June Issue: April 1
September Issue: July 1
December Issue: October 1

Azalea Calendar

March 4,5 & 11,12 Houston Azalea Trail, Houston, Texas, sponsored by the River Oaks Garden Club. Tickets \$12 in advance, \$15 day of tour. Contact 713-523-2483.

March 22-24 ASA Convention and Annual Meeting, Charleston, South Carolina. Contact Jerry Ladner (1-228-832-0236) or Robert Lee (rdlee@l-55.com).

March 24-April 8 Tyler Azalea Trail, Tyler, Texas. A whole range of events, tours of gardens in the community, azalea quilt show, Azalea and Spring Flower Fest 2000 (April 1) and tour of Ina Brundrett Azalea Garden on Tyler Junior College Campus. (Contact Dawn Parnell, VP Tyler CVB, 800-235-5712, or www.tylertexas.com).

April 7-9 Gardeners of Wake County Aza-

lea Sale, Raleigh, North Carolina, State Fairgrounds in the Flower Show Area. Hours: Friday and Saturday, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sunday 12 - 5 p.m. About 10,000 plants from 100 varieties available, including deciduous varieties. Master Gardeners will be on hand with care and culture information. For more information, contact sale chairman Jim Wilson, 919-847-5599.

April 9 Dedication of the Ruby Mize Azalea Garden, Nacogdoches, Texas. Contact SFA Mast Arboretum 936-468-4343 or 936-569-2929.

April 14-16 Reflection Riding Arboretum & Botanical Garden's Spring 2000 Wildflower and Native Plant Sale, Chattanooga, Tennessee, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 1-5 p.m. on Sunday. Sales of wildflowers and

native plants, all propagated at Reflection Riding, plus guided wildflower walks and mini "stump talks" at the greenhouse. Programs will include proper planting and care of rhododendrons and native azaleas. Contact 423-821-9582, fax: 423-822-2300, e-mail: gonative@reflection-riding.org.

April 22 Sale of early bloomers at US National Arboretum, Washington, D.C.

May 5-7 Landon School Azalea Garden Festival, Bethesda, Maryland. Contact 301-320-1065.

May 13 Sale at Tilden Middle School, Rockville, Maryland.

May 21 Sale at Brookside Gardens, Wheaton, Maryland.

'Oh My' Is Very Pretty, But 'My-O' Is 'Irresistible'

William C. Miller III — Bethesda, Maryland

Here we have two similar names and two interesting stories of two very different plants. Their stories demonstrate the importance of cultivar registration, which seeks, among other things, to avoid the confusion of having the same cultivar name (or a confusingly similar one) used more than once.

Harding's 'Oh My'

On official travel to Japan for the US Department of Agriculture in 1929, R. Kent Beattie, a Senior Pathologist in the Bureau of Plant Industry, collected cutting material of azalea cultivars. Beattie is generally known for the Kurume hybrids that comprised the majority of the plants in the group, since the deciduous cuttings did not survive. Not well known, however, is the fact that there were five Satsuki (see Table 1) among the plants that Beattie collected. One of those Satsuki hybrids, which was later named 'Oh My' by George Harding, is the initial focus of this article.

The author was first introduced to 'Oh My' when visiting George Harding at his home in Germantown, Maryland. According



Fig. 1 'Oh My' showing the occasional self-colored flower.

to George, he named it 'Oh My' because every time a woman saw it, that was what she said. (See Figure 1.) It is not clear when George named it, but the lack of a name was awkward and presented a problem. I have a copy of an August 18, 1970 letter written to George by Dr. Robert G. Angle of Bethesda, Maryland in which Dr. Angle wrote:

"Dear George,

A copy of my reply from [the] Dept. of Agriculture is enclosed. I think I'll write to Japan and see if I can get a name. Do you know any Japanese who can help us put a name on this beauty?

Yr. Obed. Serv.

RGA"

A search of the records at Glenn Dale confirms that PI 77087 *Rhododendron indicum* No. 544 "Satsuki," as it was known, was collected at the Agricultural College, Imperial University Komaba, Tokyo, Japan, on February 1, 1928. It was received and propagated at the Glenn Dale Plant Introduction Station, but there is no indication that it was ever planted in the Glenn Dale woods. I could not locate any records indicating to whom the propagations were distributed, although I am sure that it must have been

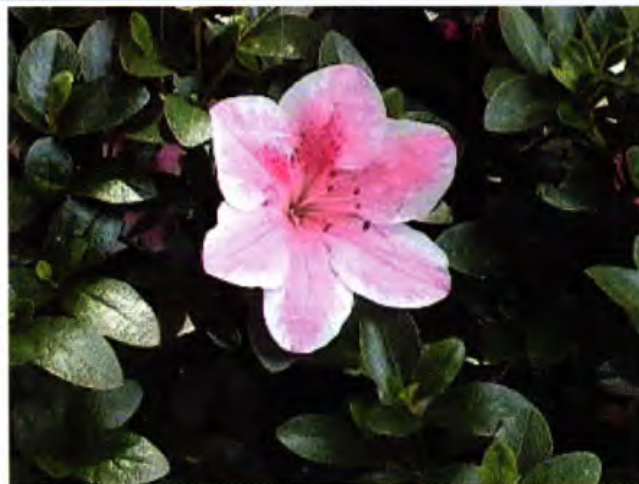


Fig. 2 Typical 'Oh My' flower with lush green foliage.

sent to the typical list of cooperators as an *R. indicum* "Satsuki" for an evaluation (feedback), because that was what the Glenn Dale Station people did. I sent an e-mail to Kevin Tunison at the US National Arboretum and asked him to check the records to see if he had any information in the Arboretum's files regarding this azalea. He replied that he "had no record of P.I. 77087 *R. indicum* being alive at the Arboretum," so it isn't at the US National Arboretum.

It is fitting to conclude this portion of the article with Harding's description of 'Oh My':

'Oh My': Satsuki - P.I. 77087 - Unnamed introduction - Thulite Pink with white edges and darker blotch. Occasional sport of rose with blotch. One of the latest to bloom and very slow growing. Excellent evergreen. - 2 ½". (See Figure 2).

Photographs of 'Oh My' can be seen at my website at: www.theazaleaworks.com.

Pryor's 'My-O'

The second part of this article involves 'My-O', which was introduced in 1966 by the Crops Research Division of the US Department of Agriculture in Beltsville, Maryland. This federal azalea breeding program is not to be confused with Ben Morrison's Glenn Dale work. The Beltsville Hybrids (Yerkes-Pryor Hybrids) and later the Beltsville Dwarfs were both the result of work initiated by Guy Yerkes. The work was subsequently completed by Robert L. Pryor, after Yerkes' retirement in 1946 and death in 1949. The goals were to produce hardy evergreen azaleas and azaleas that could be forced for the florist trade. *R. kaempferi*, 'Snow', 'Firefly', 'Indica Alba', 'Maxwell', 'Salmon Beauty', 'Pink Banner', and 'Whitecap' were used as parents. In the 1950s, from 300 candidates out of about 50,000 seedlings, a total of 47 of the so-called Beltsville Hybrids were introduced. Around 1947, Pryor modified his selection process. It had been his policy to discard "small" seedlings, but it occurred to him that the very small seedlings might be useful. That change ultimately gave way to a race of "genetic dwarfs" with normal size flowers, large and vigorous root systems, and low spreading growth habits. Nineteen Beltsville Dwarfs were introduced in 1959 and 1960, and 'My-O' was introduced in 1966.

The official USDA release notice issued on September 27, 1966 by H. Rex Thomas, Director of the Crops Research Division, described 'My-O' as "dwarf and compact in habit, about 1.5 times as wide as high. The leaves are persistent and grayish-green with white margins. Flowers are hose-in-hose, very numerous with 2 to 5 per cluster. The flower color is Spinel Red XXVI 71V RR of the Ridgeway [sic] Color Chart. The flowers are 1.5" in diameter with

from 5 to 7 anthers." In a 1967 article published by Pryor in *HortScience*, he reported that the stamens are about one-quarter-inch shorter than the petals, the anthers are darker than the filaments, and the style is about as long as the filaments.

'My-O' was field tested in Beltsville for three years, was reportedly bud-hardy to Zone 7 and higher, and was found to be suitable for forcing. The conclusion was that it would be well suited for anywhere that dwarf azaleas would be appropriate. It was distributed to cooperators for additional cooperative trials and for multiplication and dissemination to the trade. Among the recipients of record were Tom Dodd Nurseries (Semmes, Alabama), Kingsville Nurseries (Kingsville, Maryland), Ten Oaks Nursery and Gardens (Clarksville, Maryland), August Vorndran Nursery (Webster, New York), Butler Nurseries (Fayetteville, North Carolina), Frierson's Flowers (Denmark, South Carolina), Dr. J. Harold Clark (Long Beach, Washington), Dr. E. A. Hollowell (Port Republic, Maryland), Columbia Nursery (Alexandria, Virginia), and Holland Gardens (Beltsville, Maryland).

There is something special about the foliage. Described as originating as a "sectorial chimera" in a seedling from the cross 'Hino Crimson' x 'Salmon Elf', it is variegated. Rather than the typical white mottling or flecking, it is a white band on the leaf margin (e.g., 'Silver Sword', the sport of 'Girard Rose'). In its day, this form of leaf variegation was quite novel.

Edwin K. Parker (Jay Murray's predecessor), self-described as the "intermediary for U.S. registrations of rhododendrons (including azaleas) internationally", had noted the reference to 'My-O' in an article that Pryor had published in the *Journal*,

American Rhododendron Society. In a letter dated February 2, 1977, he encouraged Pryor to register 'My-O'. Pryor, in his February 8, 1977 reply, indicated that 'My-O' "was supposed to have been registered in both the American and International Registrar [sic] by Dr. Harold Clark of Washington State." He went on to say, "It is possible that it was registered under the name 'Irresistible'. I had this name cleared by Dr. Clark, but found after clearing that it was being used by Mr. Lewis." In a February 11, 1977 reply, Parker reported, "I find 'Irresistible' (U.S.D.A. #60-7) registered. Has the plant been distributed widely under the name, 'My-O'? If so, perhaps I should look into a name change with 'Irresistible' as a synonym. I'm not sure the International Registrar would go for this, but we could ask." To my knowledge, a change was not pursued. To be sure, reversals and changes in registrations do not contribute to keeping matters straight.

Pryor's 'My-O' (more properly 'Irresistible') and Harding's 'Oh My' are two attractive evergreen cultivars with similar names and radically diverse but interesting histories. From what I have been able to determine, 'My-O' may well be 'Irresistible', but 'Oh My' is available.

William C. Miller III, Co-Chairman of the ASA's Membership Committee and Chairman of the Public Information Committee, is a recipient of the Society's Distinguished Service Award and the Brookside Gardens Chapter's Frederic P. Lee Commendation. He is a past President of the Brookside Gardens Chapter, a former Vice President of the Society, a past member of the ASA Board of Directors, a long time ASA member, and a frequent contributor to THE AZALEAN.

Plant Introduction No.	Name	Beattie No.	Bell No.	Description from Gunning/Morrison
77087	Satsuki	544	B10202	Stamens 5, stigma pink, petals rounded. Very symmetrical flower, large. Blotching conspicuous Thulite Pink. 1/29/29 A perfectly typical form of <i>R. indicum</i> (<i>A. macrantha</i>). Useful pollen parent.
77104	Satsuki	561	B10219	Stamens 5, stigma pink, anthers large. Spots conspicuous, large, many. Excellent foliage. Spinel Pink (Ridgway). Very good. 9/18/29 A very good form of <i>R. indicum</i> (<i>A. macrantha</i>).
77105	Satsuki	562	B10220	Stamens 5-6. Stigma pink. Moderate-sized flowers. Lobes equal or nearly so. Very good shape, no blotching. Slightly darker than Rose color, but not as dark as Rose Red (Ridgway). This form is very similar to 77099 ('Kurai-no-himo'). <i>R. indicum</i> clone.
77145	Indica, Mac. Satsuki*	605	B10260	(Not described)
77146	No Name	607	B10261	Stamens 5, stigma pink, star shape, large flower. Good. Deep Rose Pink (Ridgway). 2/2/29. Blotched, but not conspicuously. Drawing shows a rounded flower that suggests a clone of <i>R. indicum</i> .

TABLE 1: In 1948, Ben Morrison recorded notes of field observations of Beattie's plants taken at the Glenn Dale station by himself and Harry A. Gunning, the Glenn Dale Superintendent. Morrison noted "The complete collection was not maintained at Glenn Dale, Maryland, which is now (1948) very much regretted from the historical, not horticultural, point of view." The only person known to have received the complete collection of Beattie's plants, according to Morrison, was H. E. Allanson, who was Assistant Chief in the Bureau of Plant Industry. The records of Beattie's collections appear in the USDA Inventories Nos. 93 (October-December, 1927), 95 (April-June, 1928), and 98 (January-March, 1929). The Beattie azalea introductions were propagated and distributed to commercial nurseries in 1933, 1934, and 1935.

*Note: Plant Inventory 95 entry for PI77145 is "*Rhododendron* sp. No. 605 Satsuki."

Cultivar Name/Number	Formula	Description
'My-O' / (#60-7)	'Hino Crimson' x 'Salmon Elf'	Dwarf and compact in habit. Leaves are persistent and grayish green with white margins. Flowers are hose-in-hose, 2 to 5 per head, 1.5 inches in diameter, Spinel Red (RHS 66/86/95 58A/60C/58A) with 5-7 anthers.
'Hino Crimson'	'Amoenum' x 'Hinodegiri'	1 1/4 inch, Vivid Red (RHS 52A); Strong Red (Galle)
'Salmon Elf' / (#528)	#140 x #72	Very dwarf, about as wide as high. Flowers are hose-in-hose, 2 to 3 per head, 1 1/4 inch, deep yellowish pink with a dark blotch.
#140	<i>R. kaempferi</i> (Plant A) x 'Snow'	Not available
#72	'Maxwell' x 'Snow'	Not available

Table 2: In the literature, Pryor reports the parentage of 'Salmon Elf', the pollen parent of 'My-O', as being (*R. kaempferi* x 'Snow') x ('Firefly' x 'Snow'). Pryor's working papers, however, indicate that 'Maxwell' rather than 'Firefly' is the correct seed parent of the pollen parent for 'Salmon Elf'.

What Are Those Spots?

Bill Steele — West Chester, Pennsylvania

July 1998: Three or four people asked if I knew what was causing the spots on azalea leaves. I didn't know. I didn't have the spots in my nursery, but I had no doubt that I could find a quick solution. Over a year later I still don't know.

The spots were irregularly and randomly spaced yellow dots from the size of a pinhead to 1/16 inch in diameter. They appeared near the end of June to the beginning of July on current new growth. It is interesting to note that later new growth, on the same branches, did not have the spots. They were not limited to azaleas, but also occurred on lepidotes (small-leaf rhododendrons), and elepidotes (large-leaf rhododendrons). The spots were not new. One person who had them recalled seeing them on a plant in Robert Gartrell's garden about 25 years ago. He made a remark about the nice variegated leaves. Bob Gartrell's response was, "Look closer. It's not a variegation."

Apparently whatever was causing the spots does not harm the plants. One person, who doesn't believe in spraying, has had the spots for at least ten years. The spots that appeared around the end of June had faded or disappeared by fall. The cycle is repeated again the following year, with no evidence of stress to the plants. Occasionally damage from other sources is confused with the spotting. In a few instances the plants that had spots have been in a state of decline. Upon fur-



*Undersides of foliage with cottony egg sacs.
Photographs by author.*

ther examination, the cause of the decline was found to be the result of azalea bark scale, spider mites, or something else not associated with the spots.

I am only aware of the spotting occurring in parts of Long Island, northern New Jersey, the mainline area of Philadelphia, and an isolated case on two adjacent plants in a garden in central New Jersey. It had just started to appear on azaleas in two arboretums in the Philadelphia area.

August 1998: A sample was sent to the Plant Disease Clinic at Penn State. They said it was not a disease. This has been confirmed by other sources. Samples were sent to Greg Hoover, Dept. of Entomology, Penn State; Barbara Bullock, Curator of Azaleas, US National Arboretum; and Bill Miller, The Azalea Works. None had seen this type damage before. Barbara sent her sample to Scott Aker at the National Arboretum. Bill Miller sent his sample to Dr. John Neal, a retired entomologist from the United States Dept. of Agriculture Station at Beltsville, Maryland. They had not seen this type of spotting before and could only conjecture as to its cause.

End of May 1999: Cottony masses, approximately 1/16-inch wide by 3/8-inch long began to appear on the undersides of the leaves of azaleas, lepidotes, elepidotes, and some trees. One person remarked that they were on everything except peonies. Some masses were even on the side of a building! I contacted everyone I knew who had leaf spotting in 1998, and they all had the cottony masses. Samples sent to Greg Hoover confirmed they were egg masses, each containing from 500 to 1000 lemon yellow eggs. Because there were no adult females present, he was unable to identify them any further than some type of soft scale.

End of June 1999: The egg sacs started to hatch, and the spotting began to occur on the leaves of the new growth. Again I contacted everyone I knew who had the egg sacs. The spotting was just begin-

ning to appear on their plants also.

As the spots were forming, I sent samples to Greg Hoover, Barbara Bullock, and Bill Miller. Barbara sent her sample on to Ethel Dutky and John Davidson, Dept. of Entomology at University of Maryland. They said the crawlers and egg sacs were from a *Pulvinaria*-type scale (Cottony *Camellia* scale). They could find no evidence of insect damage causing the spotting. Because the sample they received had been sprayed with Cygon (a very potent insecticide, not usually recommended for azaleas), they suspected it was an injury resulting from this spraying.

Bill Miller sent his sample to Dr. John Neal. Dr. Neal theorized that the adult scales had left the host plant and laid eggs on azaleas and other plants. When the crawlers hatched, they attempted to feed, causing the spots, but they were unable to feed so they either died or found



Azalea foliage with mysterious spots.

another suitable host plant. This seemed like the answer until I spoke with the person in central New Jersey. The egg sacs and the spotting were limited to the same two plants and didn't spread. For the past two years when the crawlers started to hatch, he sprayed with Malathion, and he feels this has helped to control the spreading.

Greg Hoover said that scale does not travel very far. When the crawlers hatch,

they must feed in 48 hours or they will die. He could classify them no further than a *Pulvinaria*-type scale.

Bud Gehrich, past president of the American Rhododendron Society and a resident of Long Island, New York, had also been trying to find the cause of the spotting. He contacted Jim Thornton, past president of the Azalea Society of America, who lives in Georgia. He had not seen them before and could only surmise what had caused them.

Bud also sent spotted leaves to Margery Daughtrey and Daniel Gilrein of the Cornell Cooperative Extension on Long Island, and Jim Stimmel, Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture. They found some scale crawlers on the leaves, but the positions of spots and crawlers did not coincide in all cases, so the scale could not be ruled the perpetrator.

Dan Gilrein and Margery Daughtrey speculated that it might be *Exobasidium burtii*, a relative of the fungus that causes the gall on azaleas. However, according to the *Compendium of Rhododendron and Azalea Diseases*, "as they age, the spots become covered by a white fungus growth and eventually turn brown from the center out." These spots do not turn brown. In the fall they actually turn a pale green as if they were attempting to take on chlorophyll.

Dan Gilrein felt it is conceivable that the spotting may be a reaction to scale feeding, but this is by no means certain. He also said, "Scale insects probably find new host plants a number of ways. We found newly hatched cottony maple scale crawlers blown from a Norway maple onto roses and herbaceous perennials about a hundred feet away. The crawlers can also move onto new plants via 'bridges' where plant parts overlap. Animals can play a role: hemlock woolly adelgid crawlers are known to be transported incidentally by birds. Infested plants can also be introduced to landscapes and be the source of problems in new areas. Adding to the situation is the fact that locally (on Long Island) we have had unusually high populations of scale infestations on landscape plants over the last several years all around Long Island, raising awareness and interest (and per-

haps increasing observable symptoms of infestation or injury) related to scale problems."

Margery Daughtrey remarked that people have been asking her about the spotting for 20 years, but lately these questions are becoming more frequent.

Barbara Bullock wondered if it could be a virus and suggested that I contact the Agdia Laboratory in Indiana. I contacted Dr. Henn at the Agdia Laboratory. After I had described the spotting to him, he said it is probably not a virus because a virus would continue, and not allow later new growth to be unaffected. He suggested I contact Dr. Gary Simone at the University of Florida. Dr. Simone said it did not sound like a virus. I sent him a sample. Dr. Simone's response typified the response from most experts: "No pathogens could be observed on or recovered from symptomatic tissue. Observed symptoms must be attributed to either environmental or cultural stress. No evidence of disease. Spots are not consistently associated with insects, nor is there evidence of feeding wounds. I have not seen this malady before and have no explanation for it based upon the sample and phone conversation."

Steve Schroeder, a member of the board of directors of the Azalea Society of America, and also proprietor of Holly Hills Nursery in Indiana, felt it might be ozone damage. When I sent him a sample, he said he had not seen it before, and it was not ozone damage.

At this time we have eliminated: jettisoned jet fuel, solvent from roofing compounds, ozone damage, pollutants from a local industry, a reaction to an insecticide or fungicide, a disease, a virus, feeding of adult lace bugs, and white fly damage.

Even though entomologists have not found any insect damage connected with the spotting, we feel there is some connection between the egg sacs that appeared on the undersides of the leaves at the end of May and the crawlers that hatched at the end of June.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the lady who has allowed

me to come into her garden and take branches from her plants to send to almost everyone I know within the eastern United States. Entomologists have difficulty isolating what is causing a problem when the sample has lace bugs, red spider mites, white flies, mealy bugs, azalea bark scale, predatory thrips, and probably a host of other insects. After each sample was analyzed, I would tell this beleaguered lady they hadn't found the cause of the spotting yet, but you should spray for... I think she has worn out at least three sprayers. She sprayed in March with horticultural dormant oil, in early May with Decathelon, and in late May hired a professional. HE SPRAYED WITH CYGON. Apparently there is a form or concentrate that may be used on azaleas, and this was what he used. There was no damage to the plants. She was devastated when the egg sacs appeared at the end of May to early June, three to five egg sacs on the undersides of the leaves of as many plants. She didn't give up. After the eggs hatched, she got her trusty sprayer out again and sprayed the crawlers and her spotted azaleas with Orthene and a miticide. At the present time her plants look beautiful, there is no sign of insects, and I think the spots make a nice contrast.

Although the spots have not caused any visible damage to the plants, we should find the cause and control before it spreads further. This is not a good article for a nurseryman who specializes in azaleas and lepidotes to write. It could scare off a lot of customers, but I don't have these spots, yet. My goal is to find the cause and the cure before I get them, and before a lot of other people get them.

Next year's plans include sending samples beginning the second week of May, on a weekly basis, to Greg Hoover and all other interested entomologists. This will hopefully result in a positive identification of the scale that is laying the eggs in the cottony masses. I find it difficult to imagine that there is not a trap available for this purpose. The lady who has been kind enough to open her garden for me may find flypaper stuck to the undersides of a lot of leaves next May.

continued on page 16

Expert Opinions: And That's the Truth!

Barry L. Sperling – Alexandria, Virginia

Finding the best way to grow azaleas could take years of experimentation, so it would seem natural to ask successful gardeners for their “secrets” and read a lot of books. Unfortunately, contradictory advice is the norm, and one may be left as much in the dark on the details as before starting. With luck, however, broad outlines of an accepted procedure do appear.

Four years ago I stood by idly watching the last sprigs of a neglected azalea slowly wither into dust and wondered “What would happen if I watered that thing?” A revolutionary question for a horticulturally challenged middle-aged man! So for no known reason, I started watering the forgotten azaleas that were left over from a decades-old planting spree.

After scientific study, I noticed that the plants didn't die (and actually looked a little better for the watering). So I next conceived the question (completely on my own): “What would happen if I fertilized that thing?”

Thus followed much reading of books and magazines and then a trip to the nearby American Horticultural Society (AHS), where I read some more and asked if there was an Azalea Society. I had a million hobbies and learned long ago that joining a group was a great way to learn more, so it was a natural question. Actually, I had a head start since I had worked with [ASA member and current ASA board member] Don Hyatt, whose name is familiar to readers of **THE AZALEAN**; I remembered that he was involved with rhododendron and azalea groups, so I knew that such existed. When my wife and I moved

into our house 22 years ago, he gave us an azalea that actually lived! People working at AHS thought that there might be such a group, but they couldn't find one.

A call to Don put me in touch with the Northern Virginia Chapter of the ASA, and I was on my way!

Then began a long sequence of questions for those I met at meetings and during visits to their gardens, centering around: “What is the best way to take care of the plants?”

The answers ranged from a) do nothing, and they are fine, to b) the soil must be _____, and the fertilizer must be _____, and you must water regularly. Some people solve their problems by simply tearing out the poorly performing plants and trying again. Others spray insecticide and mineral mixes. Some prepare their soil carefully down to a depth of three feet. Some dig a little hole and stick them in. Some only transplant in the dead of winter, others any time. Some never prune, and others shear regularly for dense flowers. I sent some soil, from two beds I had mixed, to Virginia Tech for analysis (\$10 each), and the results came back with pHs of 7.1 and 6.1. Aluminum sulfate was recommended, so I rushed out, bought all I could find nearby, and threw it on. Then, thumbing through Galle's book, I read that this adds harmful salts to the soil and that ground sulfur is the proper treatment.

What do the books say? Below is an interesting cross-section from Galle, Reiley, Ortho, and Fairweather. In keeping with my desire to provide a perfect situation, I checked them out for instructions on soil, planting,

mulching, and fertilizer instructions. (See Table 1.)

Well, I'm sure that “the truth is out there,” and I'll keep asking questions, reading, and experimenting, trying to find the answers to the questions: “For Azalea X, what is the proper soil pH and content, lighting, wind-shielding, color and blossom-time matching, watering schedule, and disease control?” “And how are these variables for Azalea X different from those for Azalea Y?” Though I may never really know, it will still be fun finding out!

Barry Sperling taught Mathematics and Computer Science in Fairfax County for 33 years. He retired in June of 1999, and hopes to be able to put more time into learning and disseminating knowledge on the azalea e-mail list and Bob Stelloh's web site.

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Table 1. Comparison of Expert Opinions

Source	Soil	Mulch
Galle	pH 4.5 - 6 Add peat, leaf mold, and pine bark.	After hardening off in the fall.
Reiley	pH 4.5 - 5.5 Amend 4' in diameter. Use coarse, not fine ground, peat moss.	After soil freezes or growth has hardened off.
Ortho	pH 5 - 6 Amend alkaline soil with 5-% peat moss. For established plants add aluminum sulfate, ferrous sulfate, ammonium sulfate, or sulfur.	Shredded peat moss, pine needles, aged wood chips, pine bark, 2-4".
Fairweather	pH 6 Add coarse peat moss, leaf mold, pine needles, bracken or fern.	In autumn 1-2" deep for 18" high plant.
Source	Soil	Mulch
Galle	Low nutritional requirements. Hurt by moderate to high applications. Soluable 10-6-4 or even 20-20-20 ok.	Best in early spring, fall, and early winter. Top of root ball at surface or slightly higher. 2 gal. - container in a hole 12" deep and 24" across, minimum.
Reiley	Slow release nitrogen urea formaldehyde with planting and top-dressing.	Plant in fall, > 1 month before soil freezes; in spring after hard frost and before flowering. Hole > 2X root ball. In poorly drained soil: 4' wide, 12-18" good soil on top, raised bed. In good soil, amend to 8". Roots could go down to 11". Place root ball 1" above soil level. Spread roots if in soil-less container. 3"-high circle berm, 6" from root ball for watering, add 2" mulch, but not within 2" of stem.
Ortho	Use lightly around dripline, except in late summer or fall. February to mid-April use 10-7-7. May not be necessary with good soil.	Hole 1'-2' wider than root ball. Center of hole undisturbed to prevent settling. Use 1:1 soil: peat moss or other organics. Top of ball slightly above soil level. Build a water basin around with extra blackfill. Transplant anytime, except in extremely hot, cold, or dry weather.
Fairweather	Use sulfate of ammonia, 1/2 oz./sq. yd. light top-dressing in spring.	Root ball 1" BELOW surface, fill with dirt-peat mix to stem, making level, firm lightly.

Table based on article printed in February 1999 issue of "Azalea Clipper."

To Label or Not to Label

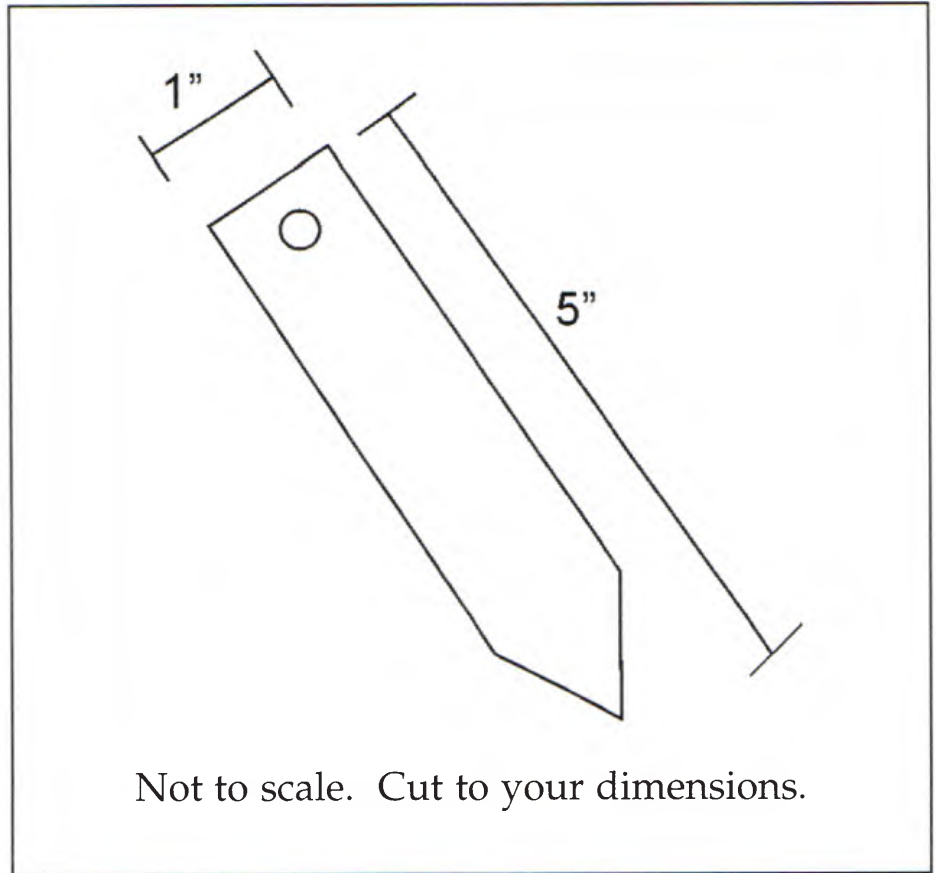
James O. Thornton – Conyers, Georgia

That is not the question. The question is, "What do we use to label our plants without a lot of frustration and expense?"

The frustration is akin to going to the fridge for ice cubes, knowing full well you are going to drop one on the floor right off the bat. Oh, I've learned to deal with this, I just go ahead and throw one on the floor and get it over with! So it is with labeling our plants. You know going in, one of several things is going to happen! The writing is going to fade, the labels will get scattered or deteriorate, or just plain disappear, and otherwise become a chore that was absolutely useless to start with! This brings about another question, "Why label?" "But we must, we must, sayest the lord of azaleas, that's why!" So we keep trying!

Over the years I've done my share of trying and giving up on labeling my plants with a lot of stress. I want to label without going broke buying the most of expensive labels, which I'm sure can cure a lot of my problems. So for the last several years, I've been doing some experimenting to remedy my problems and doing it cheaply. Please let me share.

About two years ago I found some spare louvered blinds, the narrow kind, metal, and decided they might make some neat labels, cheap and easy to work with. So, with my scissors, hole puncher, and my handy dandy etching machine, I went to work. The blinds are about an inch wide, so cutting into 4- or 5-inch strips, punching a hole for copper wiring, I had a bunch of cheap labels. I was ready to start inscribing. The writing was kind of hard to read, but Mother Nature soon took over with a little rust and they became quite easy to read. A word of caution, Mother Nature can do too good of a



job; when the labels are inserted in the soil, they start to deteriorate after about two years. So.... back to the drawing board, the handwriting was on the wall!

In the wee hours one morning a vision came to me. It was about a vinyl siding salesman. You see, they were going to be in the neighborhood, and they had this deal, their siding was the best, inexpensive, and least but not last, would last a zillion years! Last a zillion years, that was the kicker! So.....you get the picture? Why not a vinyl siding plant label? How could I lose?

Here I go again, this time with snips, hole puncher, copper wire, etching machine, but no vinyl siding. A visit to a new subdivision, still under construction, produced plenty of raw material for me to work with on

this project. I followed the same procedure as before (see sketch). One hitch in working with the vinyl, Mother Nature doesn't readily work on improving readability of your inscription. She needs a little help. I've used Magic Markers, but now that I think about it, a little wood stain might work better.

Well, that's where I stand on solving my label problems. Who knows? Those vinyl salesmen may be right! I'll let you know in a zillion years!

P.S. You vinyl folks heard it here first. Just make the royalty checks out to the Azalea Society of America.

[Jim Thornton has been president and vice president of the ASA, was one of the co-founders of the Oconee Chapter, and is a frequent contributor to *THE AZALEAN*.]

Azalea Gardens

Azaleas of Reflection Riding Arboretum and Botanical Garden

J. E. Schild, Jr. – Hixon, Tennessee

Reflection Riding Arboretum and Botanical Garden covers 300 acres on the western slope of Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The Arboretum is bounded by Lookout Creek on the west and the Chattanooga-Chickamauga Battlefield Park System on three sides, thus creating an urban pocket forest within eight minutes of downtown Chattanooga. Native azaleas and very large evergreen rhododendrons are indigenous to the Arboretum. As a drive-through arboretum, one is reminded of Cades Cove in the Great Smoky Mountains with its lush forest, open meadows, riparian banks, and wildlife.

Canada geese and wild ducks are found on the two large ponds, while keeper size fish navigate the depths. Red and gray fox, bobcat, raccoon, beaver, and white tail deer are frequently observed. Wild turkey may be observed in large flocks. Several species of hawk and owl may be seen while an occasional overflight of a bald eagle brings everyone out to watch it soaring in the updrafts.

Reflection Riding is a listed historic site with much to offer in Civil War and Native American history. Many trees still standing date back prior to the Civil War. A huge white oak bears a sign noting its existence in 1869. A giant tulip poplar near Davis Spring dates before that. The three-acre vegetable and butterfly garden area was farmed by the Cherokee, and a few hundred yards south is a leg of the Sisca Trail.

One may drive through the Arboretum on the three plus miles of roads or, for the hikers and walkers, there are nearly fourteen miles of trails to explore. Portions of the trail system connect with the National Park System trails, and one may hike to historic locations such as Lookout Point Park on top of Lookout Mountain. But, it is the shrubs, trees, vines and wildflowers that draw public attention to the Arboretum.

Spring at Reflection Riding is truly an amazing time with large drifts of wildflowers in bloom. Many of the flowers were planted through the years, but large numbers were in place from the beginning. As a natural landscape park, the emphasis has been on keeping its visual impact as free of man-made structures as possible.

My association with Reflection Riding began when I was asked to consult with the governing board on the proposed site location and possible azaleas for an ericaceous garden. At the time, only azaleas indigenous to the area were being considered, but with a shift in policy and plan, all of the native species were allowed, expanding the possibilities of bloom time and color. In 1982, the late Thomas Kane of Pleasantville, New York, in his Conservation and Development Plan, first proposed setting aside the three-acre tract for development of the habitat reserved for members of the ericaceous family.

In 1993, I took several truckloads of staff and volunteers of the Tennessee Valley Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) to my Cumberland Mountain property, and we located and dug a large number of select native azaleas for installation at the Riding. In 1994, Mr. Olan Holsomback, a respected rhododendron breeder and grower of Chickamauga, Georgia, donated a large collection of native azaleas and evergreen rhododendron for inclusion in the garden plus another site to be later named Holsomback Garden.

In 1995, the Garden was dedicated to the memory of P. Robert Philp and is supported by his family, the Friends of Reflection Riding, and members of the Tennessee Valley Chapter-ARS. Reflection Riding is honored to be chosen by Katherine, Bob Jr., and Clara as a place for remembrance.

Little did I know in 1993 that I would be chosen as a board member, then in 1996, be asked to take the helm as Landscape Manager. To the credit of the governing board and Philp family, the Philp Garden is evolving into a regional center for the study of the Ericaceae (Heath Family), especially for its collection of azaleas and rhododendrons native to the eastern United States. All of the natives are represented, except *Rhododendron oblongifolium*, through donations and propagation in Reflection Riding's nursery and greenhouse.

Many azaleas were collected from cuttings or seed taken from wild stands or garden varieties. There is much diversity within species, so particular care was taken in the selection process, especially to display the range of colors and growth habits. With bloom time from early April through August, there is color to be observed in the garden from the road that passes through it or by foot-trails that allow close-up observation. All of the shrubs and trees in the Garden are properly labeled with both common and botanical names for ease of identification, study and comparison. In and around the plantings, one will also find mountain laurel, holly, hemlock, ferns and thousands of wildflowers. Pathways wind through the garden, and a Memorial Bench is located at its center for contemplation and reflection.

Situated on a site with a western exposure, the Garden presented a rather difficult aspect. In 1993, selected trees were removed to provide sufficient sun exposure for good azalea bud set. Then, in 1995, the remnants of hurricane Opal came through and removed even more trees than was desired, leaving the site more open to hot exposure. With an irrigation system in place in the Arboretum, the TVC-ARS volunteered to help staff expand it into the Philp Garden. This has paid great dividends, allowing the shrubs to prosper and giving additional room for extensive new plantings, with

many more to be added. The deep, sandy loam soil and sloping landscape provides proper drainage, and the application of Milorganite three or four times a year provides the shrubs with nutrients and deer-repellent qualities.

Fragrant species are planted close to paths and the bench to add to the experience. All shrubs are mulched with composted wood chips the staff collects after storm events or from the fallen limbs an arboretum this size seems to accumulate. The mulch creates the microclimate around the shrubs needed for good plant health and vigor.

Within the Philp Garden, one will see and experience the following, by local bloom time: *R. austrinum*, *R. periclymenoides*, *R. canescens*, *R. atlanticum*, *R. alabamense*, *R. canadense*, *R. flammeum*, *R. prinophyllum*, *R. viscosum*, *R. calendulaceum*, *R. cumberlandense*, *R. arborescens*, *R. prunifolium*, and *R. serrulatum* [now included in *R. viscosum*, Ed.]. Within each species, we have introduced as many shrubs as are available, thus presenting the broad color ranges found in the wild. There are a number of natural hybrids included within the collection and the following evergreen rhododendrons: *R. minus* var. *chapmanii*, *R. catawbiense*, *R. catawbiense* var. *insularis*, *R. minus*, *R. maximum*, and an example of the red *R. maximum* 'Mt. Mitchell', donated by Burton Johnston, President of the TVC-ARS.

Reflection Riding is fortunate to be located in Zone 7a, a climate suitable to grow almost all azaleas and rhododendron. Through trial and error, we have yet to find a *R. occidentale* that will survive our summer heat and humidity without getting powdery mildew disease and dying.

Reflection Riding staff is propagating cuttings of high-bush blueberries, found on Winesprings Bald, to be included in the Garden. These shrubs have exquisite violet-pink leaves on new growth and make a wonderful display. They are of course, ericaceous.

At worst, as something of an azalea nut, or at best, an azalea chaser, I am al-

ways looking for a new plant of merit. After thirty years of search, I have found some real jewels, and a few are now residing in the Philp Garden. From North Chickamauga Creek Gorge, I rooted a Swamp Azalea with bluish-green foliage and dramatic bloom. Cuttings of this plant were rooted, and a specimen is in the Garden. From the Cumberland Mountain, I propagated a number of the Cumberland Azalea with obvious and overzealous natural breeding with the Sweet Azalea. The blooms are shades of pink, apricot, and pinkish-red, and clones are included.

The Philp Garden is a young landscape with many wonderful azaleas in place and, as it matures, it will surely grow in beauty, stature and recognition through the region. The Philp family has endowed the Garden to ensure its continued maintenance, loving care and planned expansion. Spring at Reflection Riding is always a fantastic time to visit. During the Wildflower Festival, the Arboretum conducts walks, mini workshops, and has a huge native plant sale with expert advice on planting and care. Of course, any season is good for a visit and even the winter months give one a unique view of an exquisite natural landscape.

For those wishing to visit the Arboretum, you may call for directions, write for a brochure, use e-mail, or visit the Web page using the following:

Reflection Riding Arboretum &
Botanical Garden
400 Garden Road
Chattanooga, TN 37419
Tel. 423-821-9582
Web: <http://virtual.chattanooga.net/riding>
E-mail: rriding@chattanooga.net

Joe Schild has been involved in the nursery business for the past 30 years, and operated his own business since 1988. He was the founding president of the Tennessee Valley Chapter of the ARS and currently serves as its vice president and program chairman. He is the current vice president of the Azalea Society of America, a member of the Tennessee Nursery and Landscape Association (TNLA), and just retired as the Landscape

Manager for Reflection Riding.

Joe presents a number of programs on azaleas, rhododendron, and native plants to various garden groups, other chapters, and TNLA training programs. In the world of the rhododendron he is known as the Azalea Nut and will chase their blooming flowers all over the Southeast.

[Information about Reflection Riding's design from their website, Ed.] The history of Reflection Riding can be found in a thoughtful analysis of its name. Firstly, the concept of a "riding grounds" is the theme of the gardens. Englishman Thomas Whately defined a "riding" [in his *Observations on Modern Gardening* (1770)] as a road winding through a natural landscape that offers a variety of pleasant experiences. The idea is to facilitate man's journey through nature, by providing a trail that highlights areas of particular interest and beauty. Secondly, "reflection" describes the special beauty of Reflection Riding: the delicate reflections of the surrounding mountains and trees in the park's ponds and creek, and, more importantly, the aesthetic and spiritual exhilaration [one feels] in response to the grandeur of the landscape, which provides a peaceful and quiet haven for introspection.

Reflection Riding was developed during the 1940's by John Chambliss, a self-educated horticulturist and landscape architect, from the consolidation of three small farms. Chambliss's interest in English gardens and regional native plants fueled his vision of the Riding, and he enlisted the help of friends and horticultural experts from both America and England to complete it. Several important landscape architects provided their services in the construction of the gardens, most notably Sylvia Hunt of Kent, England, President of the Royal Society of Landscape Architects, and Gordon Cooper, from Cleveland, Ohio, the long-time editor of *Landscape Architecture*, whose vision of Reflection Riding as an outdoor arboretum continues to define

Continued on page 20

Pictures and end of article can be found on p.20

Landon Azalea Garden Festival Marks 47th Year

Ellen Marks – Potomac, Maryland

This year Landon Azalea Garden Festival celebrates its 47th year! The Festival began in 1954 when Mrs. Paul Landon Banfield, co-founder of the Landon School, first invited the public to share the beauty of the spectacular azalea garden that the school had recently acquired. The first Festival took place on May 2, 1954, and was attended by 640 people who visited Landon to view what *The Washington Star* called "one of the outstanding azalea gardens in the East," raising \$1,297 for the Landon Scholarship Fund. In 1999 the Festival attracted over 35,000 people to the campus and raised \$415,000 for scholarships.

How the Azalea Festival has grown and flourished over the years is the story of an extraordinary school-wide collaboration involving parents, faculty, staff, students, and alumni in a common effort to provide scholarship assistance to deserving students by welcoming the community to Landon's campus at the peak of its springtime beauty.

The Landon School is a private boys school in Bethesda, Maryland. In 1958, Landon boys took azalea plants to The White House as a gift for Mrs. Eisenhower to plant at Camp David. *National Geographic*, *The New York Times*, and *House Beautiful* publicized the event, and orders were taken for the newly developed emerald Zoysia grass from Milo Perkins' Turfgrass Farm in Arizona, which was "flown in a special treated bag to arrive lettuce-fresh for display." The Festival report concluded that the event "...is rapidly becoming one of metropolitan Washington's outstanding springtime attractions."

During the 1960's and early '70s the Azalea Festival was championed by the wives of Washington's political elite. In 1962 First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy served as the Festival's Honorary Chair and Lady Bird Johnson, wife of the Vice President, was invited to open the event by cutting the ceremonial ribbon. Landon

students visited Mrs. Johnson at her home to present her with azaleas for her own garden. Mrs. Johnson subsequently served as Honorary Chair of the Festival for five years while her husband was President.

Through the 1990s the Landon Azalea Garden Festival has grown tremendously, with its focus clearly on displaying and sharing the beautiful Perkins Garden with our surrounding community of Bethesda, Maryland, in pursuit of the festival's major goal of providing educational opportunities to a diverse and deserving student body at Landon School. Held the first weekend in May, the annual Landon Azalea Garden Festival has afforded visitors, azalea experts, and hobbyists a most wonderful opportunity to visit and enjoy a mature azalea garden. Of course, the garden may be visited at other times by special arrangement by contacting the school at 301-320-3200.

As area azalea fanciers already know, new types of azaleas have been introduced at Landon's festival. Co-chair of the Azalea Festival in 1988 and a primary founder of the Friends of the Perkins Garden, Mrs. Bobbi McCeney tells how Dr. Jim Shanks of the University of Maryland and the late Andy Adams created and tested the Princess hybrids before introducing them at the Landon Festival. One very lovely cultivar was named 'Princess Mary Lee', after Landon's co-founder Mrs. Mary Lee Banfield. More recently, from seven new azaleas produced by Bill Miller, a local azalea expert, one was selected and introduced at the festival as 'Landon Pride'. It is expected that local hybridizers will continue to use the Landon Azalea Festival as a mechanism for introducing new cultivars to the public.

The festival azalea sale will offer a wide selection of field grown Glenn Dale azaleas, many taken from cuttings from the Perkins Garden. A complete list of

azaleas and other plants for sale will be available April 27. Contact the festival headquarters, 301-320-1061, for more information.

The Perkins Garden at Landon School

The Perkins Garden covers two and half acres, offering a unique campus resource for the boys of Landon School for class meetings and visits throughout the year. The original owners of the Perkins Garden, Tharon and Milo Perkins, kept fastidious records of what was planted. It is now possible to view *Rhododendron kaempferi*, Kurumes, Satsuki, Gable, Mayo, Pericat, Southern Indian, and Glenn Dale azalea hybrids. This is all rather remarkable when we know through archival information that the first acquisitions were 15 hybrid azaleas from Mayo's Nursery and Orchard Company in Augusta, Georgia, in 1945. Many old varieties not in commercial production still grow in the garden.

Today the Perkins Garden has never been more splendid. Bobbi McCeney, the garden's horticultural historian, reports with pride that the 120 members of the Friends of the Perkins Garden assume the responsibility of maintaining and beautifying the garden.

[Ellen Marks, Landon Azalea Garden Festival Publicity Co-Chair for 2000, provided the material and photographs for this article. Information was gathered from archival information and an interview with Bobbi McCeney, Festival Co-Chair in 1988 and current historian of Perkins Garden.]

Photographs of these Azalea Gardens - Reflection Riding Arboretum and Landon Gardens - are found on p.20

Donations to the Society

Bob Stelloh – Hendersonville, North Carolina

The table below shows the gifts made to the Society by our members during the past few months. Please accept our public "Thank you!" These gifts are vital for us to maintain our current dues level without compromising the high quality of THE AZALEAN and other membership benefits. The \$2,000 gift from Brookside Gardens Chapter is particularly welcome, as we believe the website will become a very important tool for attracting new members in this electronic age.

In addition, the following 41 members contributed \$1,305 since the last issue of THE AZALEAN. The total donations to the Society in the period were \$3,305.

L. Malcolm Clark, Gen. & Mrs. Bryghte D. Godbold, William B. McIntosh, Joseph E. Schild, Jr., Mr. & Mrs. William F. Bode, Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Craft, Jr., Margarette L. Erdman, Mrs. Arthur Frazer, William & Eleanor Gural, Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd Hahn, Joseph C. Kinney, William T. Lloyd, Joan Lunney, Dick Marshall, Dr. & Mrs. Donald E. Moreland, W. T. Norris, Jr., MD, Franklin B. Pelurie, Pope's Azalea Farm, Ken & Dorothy Reese, Dr. & Mrs. A. Chandler Schmal, Swarthmore College, Bruce Seal & Liz Rachun, John & Lynette Richbourg, Barbara S. Stump, Bill & Linda Summers, Mr. Frederick L. Thane, Maarten van der Giessen, Peter van der Giessen, Mr. & Mrs. Art Vance, Margaret Vogel, Donald H. Voss

What Are Those Spots?
continued from page 9

Unanswered Questions: Where does the scale that lays the egg masses come from? What does it eat? Why is there no visible damage to any other living plant in the area? Where does it go? What causes those spots?

Any help or information that anyone can supply will be greatly appreciated. Please send information to Bill Steele, Steele's Nursery, 1055 E. Niel's Lane, West Chester, PA 19382.

Bill Steele and his wife Ellen are retired schoolteachers who have a small nursery specializing in azalea and lepidote liners. They currently grow 2600 varieties of azaleas, with sales limited to three weekends a year: the last weekend of April and the first two weekends of May.

Reference

Coyier, Duane L. and Martha K. Roane. Eds. 1986. *Compendium of Rhododendron and Azalea Diseases*. St. Paul, Minnesota: The American Phytopathological Society.

Society and Azalea Information Online

For the benefit of anyone with Internet access who is not a member of the ASA, membership information is available at four sites:

1. www.azaleas.org (the ASA's website, where you may join).
2. www.plantweb.com/azaleasociety (the Louisiana chapter's website).
3. www.theazaleaworks.com/asa.htm (Bill Miller's website with information about the ASA).
4. www2.azaleas.org (the Society's developmental website for information and renewing membership)

Encourage your computer-literate friends to join the Azalea Society of America online, or just give any friend an application form.

Finally, to share information with, or ask questions of, azalea enthusiasts online, join our (free) ASA e-mail discussion forum for azaleas. To join this forum, send an empty e-mail to: azaleas-subscribe@azaleas.org



Chapter News

Ben Morrison Chapter

Joan Sweeney, Newsletter Editor

February 6, Don Voss presented an illustrated talk on evergreen azaleas at London Town Gardens, Edgewater, Maryland. The talk was based on the article printed in the December 1999 issue of **THE AZALEAN**, "The Growth Cycle of Evergreen Azaleas." He described his "timeline" of foliage and flower development that shows what gardeners should expect from the evergreen azalea at each season of the year.

The chapter's Steering Committee met Sunday, January 9, 2000 in the Fairview Library, Calvert County. Topics of discussion included: future plans and programs for the chapter, scheduling and locations of meetings, members authoring articles for **THE AZALEAN**, publicity for chapter activities, and the possibility of a chapter website. The Steering Com-

mittee requested input from members through their newsletter about these topics.

Brookside Gardens Chapter

Diane Gregg, President and Newsletter Editor

The chapter honored Bob and Bee Hobbs with the annual Frederic P. Lee award for their 10 years of able editing work on **THE AZALEAN**. The Society was very fortunate to have their services all that time. They are super people as well. We look forward to working with the new editor, Barbara Stump.

The annual election resulted in the current officers continuing on for another year. Officers are: President: Diane Gregg; Vice-President: Mary Rutley; Secretary: Roberta Hagen; and Treasurer: Dottie Murphree.

The chapter voted to donate \$2,000.00 to the Society to help Bob Stelloh develop the ASA website. Perhaps other chapters could also contribute; this is a very worthwhile project.

Our excellent speaker, Dr. Rob Griesbach, Research Geneticist in the Research Unit of the US National Arboretum, tried to teach us the genetic science of azalea color. Some of us got it; others at least understood the complexity of the subject. We all understood the very interesting nonscientific discussions. One particular subject close to our hearts was a possible way to get some Arboretum research on petal blight.

[The chapter's local calendar items are listed in the Society Calendar, p. 4.] One note about the Annual Azalea Flower Show at the Landon School Azalea Festival May 5-7: This is an all-azalea horticultural show with no judged arrangements. Everyone is encouraged to enter the show. The chapter wants more people to participate, so all people near Washington, DC, especially Ben Morrison and Northern Virginia chapters, think about winning blue ribbons for your prized azaleas.

Oconee Chapter

Frank Bryan, Newsletter Editor

The chapter is working on an article about varying expert opinion as to how to adapt pH for azaleas. This will appear in a forthcoming issue.

Next meeting is March 5, during which the chapter will revise the University of Georgia azalea slide program.



Brookside Gardens Chapter vice president Mary Rutley (left) presented the Frederic P. Lee Commendation for 1999 to joint recipients Bob and Bee Hobbs at the chapter's annual meeting, December 6, 1999.
Photograph by William Miller.

New Members

AT-LARGE

Jim Ethridge
5323 Dee Rd.
Memphis, TN 38117-5920

Charles Gilliam
Department Of Horticulture
Auburn University, AL 36849

Jack O. Goertzen
8407 Raintree Ave
Riverside, CA 92504

Edward G. Heupel
211 Aqueduct Rd
Washington Crossing, PA 18977-1329

Billy Joyner
9 Yorkshire Way
Flat Rock, NC 28731

Gary J. Keever
Dept Of Horticulture, 101 Funchess
Hall
Auburn University, AL 36849

Gary W. Knox
N. Florida Research & Education
Cntr.
Route 4, Box 4092
Monticello, FL 32344-9302

Bonnie Kobert
Rua J Moreira Neves #301
Recreio
Reo de Janeiro, Brazil

Steve Lott
15990 A. Earlville Rd.
Citronelle, AL 36522

Jon A Nesbitt
1949 Royal Rd.
Cordele, GA 31015-5149

Ed Pert
131 Webber Rd
Hc 33 Box 1477
Georgetown, ME 04548-9412

Piero Sambucci
C/Da Acqua Palumba 2
00049 Valletri
Roma, Italy

BEN MORRISON CHAPTER

Ruth T. Keimig
P.O. Box 1310
Solomons, MD 20688

Melvin H. Sollberger
Maryland Satsuki Gardens
1617 Harmony Acres Lane
Annapolis, MD 21401

BROOKSIDE GARDENS CHAPTER

Rob Griesbach
3574 Conchita Dr
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Michael Heid
11015 W Riverview Rd
Ft. Washington, MD 20744

Manheimer/Hertzog Ltd
43 Stompf Tavern Rd
Stockton, NJ 08559

DALLAS CHAPTER

Scott & Leah Limpert
1607 Valleywood Trail
Mansfield, TX 76063

NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER

Steve & Judy House
4616 Duncan Dr
Annandale, VA 22003

OCONEE CHAPTER

John Blackwell
690 Brookfield Pkwy
Roswell, GA 30075

Hank Bruno
Callaway Gardens
Horticultural Dept.
Pine Mountain, GA 31822-2000

Tommy Burkett
1367 Midway Rd.
Lexington, SC 29072

Diane and Neal Hayes
229 David Rd.
Greer, SC 29651-9057

Rockdale County Extension Office
Attn: Cilla Cartwright
1729 Portman Dr., Suite C
Conyers, GA 30094

James Salmon
11405 Sw 110th Ave
Dunnellon, FL 34477

TRI-STATE CHAPTER

Tadeusz Dauksza
11726 Springbrook Ct
Orland Park, IL 60467

1999 Sources and Uses of Funds

Bob Stelloh – Treasurer

<u>Income (Sources)</u>	<u>Totals</u>
THE AZALEAN	\$ 2,941.98
Membership Dues	19,893.00
Gifts	1,433.00
Interest	1,951.86
Other Income	4,038.50
Total Income	\$30,258.34
<u>Expenses (Uses)</u>	
Awards & Membership	\$ 113.85
THE AZALEAN	18,544.93
Dues Expense	3,224.21
Member Roster	700.33
Other Expense	3,661.95
Other Postage	618.98
Total Expenses	\$26,864.25
Income-Expenses	\$3,394.09

In Memory

Dr. John Allen Smith

Maarten van der Giessen – Semmes, Alabama

Walking through these woods, one might well mistake them for a native Japanese landscape. Thousands of camellia blooms arch across the canopy overhead, while the shattered sasanqua blossoms underfoot lay out a regal carpet of crimson. An occasional specimen of *Podocarpus* or azalea stands out in this forest like a lone sentinel amidst the flowering splendor. But there is no lord of this wood, no royal court to tread these halls. These are the camellia fields of Mr. K. Sawada, grandfather of the current generation of nurserymen in Mobile, Alabama. It is here that I look for some perspective on the loss of Dr. John Allen Smith, the founder of Magnolia Nursery and Gardens.

John Allen was a dentist by trade, but his passion was always plants. His gardens rivaled any in the South. His nursery was a fountain of wealth to gardeners worldwide. He dreamed of building a better, richer world around him, and his sudden loss has raised so many questions in my mind that I've come here to Sawada's fields and Sawada's life to look for answers.

Sawada, too, was a businessman, laying the foundations for his Overlook Nursery, which still thrives forty years after his passing. Yet, that doesn't explain this grove, these hundreds of sparkling blossoms that were cast upon this field. This doesn't explain the watercolors locked away in the Camellia Society archives, each one noted with the fine points of the flower and the address of the garden where he found them. Nor can commerce account for the surreal quality of *Camellia* 'Sawada's Dream'.

His grandson, Steven, told me the story that Sawada woke one morning from a vivid dream, still seeing the image before him of a flower. The petals were

pointed, and so perfectly arranged as to swirl like a vortex from the palest of pink into the purest white center. Sawada sat bolt upright in his bed but the image didn't fade. Yes... the image of lotus in *Camellia*, the perfect flower. K. Sawada spent the next twenty years crossing camellia flowers with that picture held fast before him. I sit beneath *Camellia* 'Sawada's Dream' this morning, just beginning to cast its spell upon these forgotten woods, and I think of Dr. Smith.

John Allen passed away last July, stricken down suddenly by a brain aneurysm. With him passed Magnolia Nursery, its plants sold and greenhouses emptied. With him passed Magnolia Gardens, its collections of magnolia, native azalea, its thousands of trillium, and its quiet bamboo groves, passing into the hands of a Mobile real estate developer. With him passed much of the early work of Dr. Eugene Aromi, his southern Exbury Hybrids awaiting the gardener's hand that may not come. Walking through John Allen's orchid house I heard Brahms' 'Concerto in D minor' softly playing on his radio. I found a tray of *Rohdea*, half-transplanted. His gloves lay patiently beside them on the bench.

And sitting beneath 'Sawada's Dream' I form the question that has haunted man before the gardens of Babylon were conceived, "What has been left?" Slowly the answer becomes clear. I am. You are. Every plant that John Allen shared with the community, every ounce of passion, every gleaned bit of knowledge of what these plants meant to him has survived. John Allen was a plantsman. What he gave freely - his plants, his friends, his dream - will survive.

Thirty acres of Sawada's camellia fields were bulldozed two years ago to build a Winn-Dixie shopping center. The remaining fields silently bide their time as the surrounding lands

dwindle into urban sprawl. We walk the fields of plantsmen like Langdon, Kiyono, Rubel, and Sawada with the window of the past silently closing behind us forever. Are we looking for hidden treasures or buried gold, or are we looking for something else, something more intangible, more precious than gold? Perhaps we're looking for one final conversation with plantsmen long past, one more lesson on the beauty of the world around us. And in another forty years someone will walk the woods of Magnolia Gardens. They will stand in awe of the Aromi azaleas and Gresham magnolias, and they will share in the meaning of John Allen's dream.

Northern Virginia Chapter

Frances Louer reported in the November 1999 issue of the chapter's "Azalea Clipper" that the chapter lost two people important to them: **Mrs. Gwynn (Marge) Garnett**, who was a faithful and supportive member for many years, and a former member, **Robert Trayhern**, who had opened his home and garden for a chapter meeting several years ago. His garden included two hillsides of beautiful azaleas.

Oconee Chapter

The Oconee Chapter recently suffered the loss of two of its members, **Lewis Shortt** and **Dr. Charlie Owen**. Both were active in the ASA and the ARS and were well-known for their beautiful gardens and hybridizing efforts. They will surely be missed and our prayers go out to each family. [Information from Jim Thornton, Ed.]

Reflection cont. from p.14

the purpose of the gardens. More recently, Thomas Kane, a landscape architect from New York State, came to evaluate the Riding to formulate a long-range plan for its preservation and future development.

The Riding has received prestigious awards. In 1967, Mr. and Mrs. John Chambliss received the Garden Club of America's award for conservation and education. In 1989, the American Horticultural Society (AHS) gave its Catherine Sweeny Award to Susan Irvine, the Chambliss' daughter and heir, for her commitment to the park, to recognize both the significance of Reflection Riding as a botanical garden and Irvine's devotion to it. The Riding is listed as an AHS reciprocal garden. Most recently, the Riding has been profiled in the Garden Club of America's archives at the Smithsonian Institution.



Lovely path through the grove in the Perkins Garden during 1999 Azalea Festival.

Photography by Cindy Yavinsky.



Native azalea, R. calendulaceum at Reflection Riding.

Photography by Joe Schild.



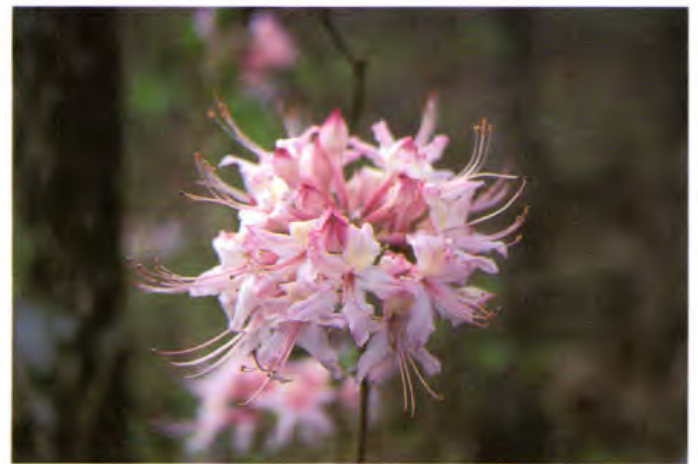
Some outstanding azaleas in Perkins Garden on the campus of Landon School. The lavender azalea is R. yedoense var. poukhanense. The brilliant orange is an unknown deciduous azalea planted in the 1940s or 1950s.

Photography by Cindy Yavinsky.



Early spring in Philp Garden during dogwood bloom.

Photography by Joe Schild.



Example of natural hybrids at Reflection Riding:

R. canescens x R. alabamense.

Photography by Joe Schild.