



***Proven Performers***

ARS chapters throughout the US compile lists of rhododendrons with good form, foliage and flowers, that are hardy and resistant to pests and diseases in their given area. These plants have proven their ability to perform well in members' gardens. The lists are at:

[http://rhododendron.org/performers\\_intro.htm](http://rhododendron.org/performers_intro.htm)

*Photographs courtesy of Eleanor Philip, Harold Greer and Warren Berg.*



'Mucronatum'

'Patty Bee'



*Membership Information*

**American Rhododendron Society**

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**ARS Home Page:**

<http://www.rhododendron.org>

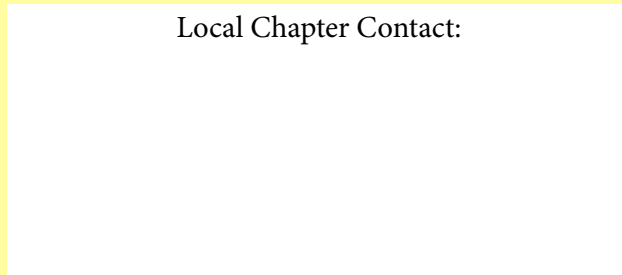
The American Rhododendron Society is a vital, active, non-profit organization that welcomes new members. Discover what it has for you. Chapters are located throughout the United States and in Canada, Denmark, Scotland, Holland, Finland, Sweden and India.



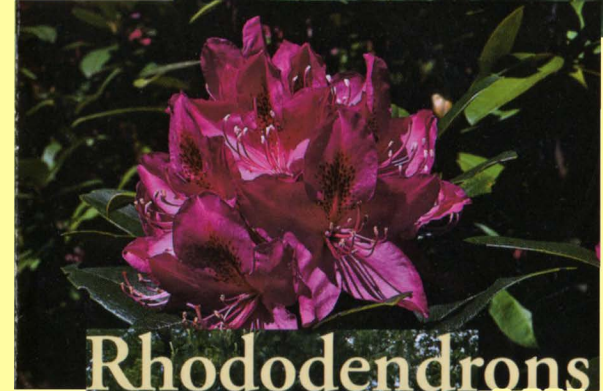
**Purpose**

To encourage interest in and to disseminate knowledge about rhododendrons and azaleas. To provide a medium through which all persons interested in rhododendrons and azaleas may communicate and cooperate with others through education, meetings, publications scientific studies, research, and other similar activities.

Local Chapter Contact:



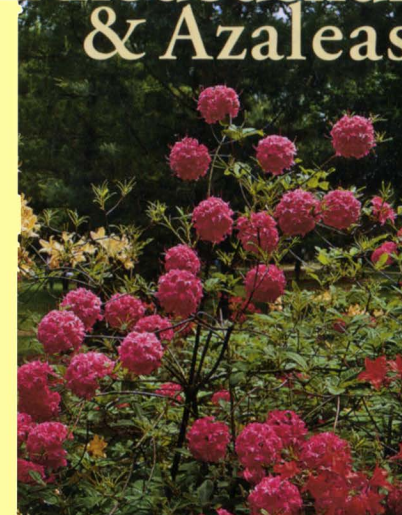
'Mist Maiden'



'Anah Kruschke'

**Rhododendrons & Azaleas**

'Homebush'



**A Guide To Planting & Care**

**American Rhododendron Society**

# Enjoying Your Rhododendrons and Azaleas

Rhododendrons and azaleas are best planted in early fall or spring, but can be planted with extra care anytime the ground is not frozen. Varieties grown outdoors in most of the United States and Canada are generally classified in four categories: large-leaf and small-leaf rhododendrons, and evergreen and deciduous azaleas.

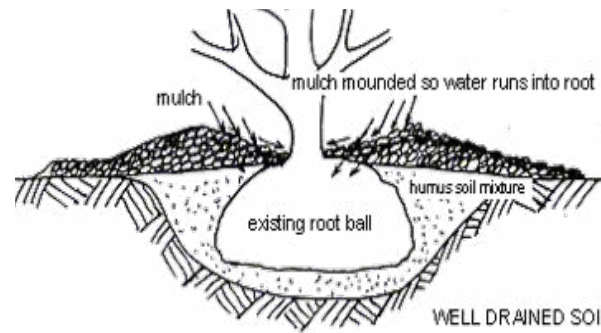
## How To Select Plants Best For Your Enjoyment

Select plants that show no signs of neglect, especially inadequate watering, as evidenced by wilting or by brown edges or tips of leaves. Be sure the plant's mature size, shape, foliage texture and flower color will fit your landscape.

## Where To Plant

All rhododendrons and azaleas grow best in a porous, moist, well-drained, acidic soil, high in organic matter. This may mean working in organic matter and acidifying the soil if it's too alkaline (pH higher than 6) by adding agricultural sulfur or ferrous sulfate. Large-leaf rhododendrons and evergreen azaleas generally prefer a site protected from drying winds and hot summer/winter sun. Small-leaf rhododendrons and deciduous azaleas tend to be tolerant of more exposed planting sites. Seek specific advice from nursery experts or ARS members in your area. Before choosing the site, consider the plant growth rate and how it will fit as it matures. Avoid planting in dry soils, too close to your foundation, under roof overhangs, under trees with aggressive root systems or in dense shade.

## How To Plant



## Side View of a Properly Planted Rhododendron or Azalea

1. Soil preparation: Dig the planting hole wider, but no deeper, than the root system of your plant. If your soil is poor quality, mix in peat moss and/or fine pine bark, and good loam to the soil excavated from the hole (but limit organic additions to 25% to enable roots to quickly re-establish in the ground). In hot areas (USDA Zone 7 and warmer) it may be necessary to use 50% pine bark to increase soil drainage. If soil is poorly drained, plant in raised beds.
2. For plants in pots and burlap: remove the container or root-wrapping material from your plant. Expose the root ends an inch (2.5 cm) or more by abrading with your fingers or a scratcher or by washing with water before setting the plant in the hole.
3. Backfilling: Make sure the top of the root system ends up slightly above final ground level. Hold extended root ends up and gently pack the soil around the roots, and form a saucer or berm near the outer edge of the hole to hold water to irrigate the roots.
4. Mulching: Add 2 to 3 inches (5 to 7.5 cm) of bark mulch or other porous material to help control weeds, conserve moisture, and hold the soil. Don't cover the root crown at the plant base.
5. Watering-in: As soon as you finish backfilling and mulching, add enough water to thoroughly

soak the soil and root system. This helps pack soil around the roots and assure rapid root growth into the surrounding ground.

## Maintenance Recommendations

1. Watering: During the first year add water once or twice a week to avoid drying of roots and ensure proper establishment of the roots. Thereafter water only as soil conditions require. Soil should not stay wet.
2. Mulching: Maintain 2 to 3 inches (5 to 7.5 cm) of mulch.
3. Fertilizing: Most rhododendrons and azaleas require very little fertilizing. Seek advice from experts in your area.
4. Deadheading: Twisting off faded flower heads soon after blooming to enhance bud-set the following year. Be careful not to damage vegetative growth shoots.
5. Pests and diseases: Healthy and vigorous plants tend to have few pest problems, but rhododendrons and azaleas can be susceptible to root weevil and leaf-chewing insects as well as root disease problems. Consult with experts in your area for advice.
6. Pruning: Properly sited rhododendrons and azaleas need minimal maintenance. If branches must be trimmed, this is best done right after flowering finishes to enable the best regrowth and flowering the following year.

For more information see website at:

[www.rhododendron.org](http://www.rhododendron.org)

or contact your local chapter through the

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