

## Overview



All rhodies and azaleas are members of the genus *Rhododendron*. Azaleas differ from "standard" rhodies in that they tend to have smaller leaves, may be deciduous or semi-deciduous, and bear relatively smaller flowers in small clusters (as opposed to the generally large clusters (trusses) of large flowers of normal rhodies. They generally have 5-lobed flowers with 1 stamen per lobe as opposed to rhodies with 2 stamens/lobe - this plus a number of open technical points best left to scientists with microscopes.



While there can be some blooms on some plants by February or earlier, the best time to see the maximum show of rhodie flowers is probably from about mid-April to mid-May – exact dates vary with seasonal weather conditions.



This is just a brief overview of rhodies and azaleas at Shore Acres Gardens. Please contact a member of the garden staff if you want more information about specific plants in the garden.

# Rhododendrons



## and Azaleas

### AT SHORE ACRES

Rhododendrons (rhodies) and Azaleas are popular landscape plants throughout western Oregon, especially at Shore Acres.

**The wide range of flowers and leaf characteristics, plant sizes ranging from dwarf shrubs to small tree sizes and a flowering season that starts as early as February and lasts as late as June, make our rhodie/azalea collection a source of year-round interest and beauty.**

## Purpose of the brochure...

To give you information about some specific plants in the park and tips on general plant care for those of you interested in growing rhodies and azaleas in your own garden.



Rhodies and azaleas do not like "wet feet." They prefer moist well-drained acid soil that contains lots of organic material. If your soil is a heavy clay-type (like ours) try to improve it by adding organic material like compost or ground bark. Thoroughly dig or rototill in with the native soil. Do not try to totally replace the old soil with new material. There must be a good blend of "old" with "new" soil in the planting hole. If conditions are really bad, consider a "raised bed" with at least ½ of the root ball above the general ground level and good soil mounded around it.



Rhodies and azaleas appreciate a mulch around the base (or root ball in a raised bed situation) to keep plant roots cool and moist and help smother out weeds. Ground bark, compost, or even shredded leaves work well as a mulch material. Don't apply too thick – about 3" to 4" is fine. More can smother the roots and stunt or kill the plant.



Generally speaking, the larger the leaves on a rhodie, the less tolerant it will be of full exposure to sun and wind – especially in warmer/drier inland areas. Plant the bigger leaved rhodies in areas of at least partial shade (shelter from strong afternoon sun is especially important) and protection against wind which can dehydrate and "burn" foliage.



Most azaleas and small-leaved rhodies enjoy considerable sun in the Pacific Northwest if given adequate moisture during dry periods. Avoid hot spots like the south and west walls of buildings. However the vast majority of rhodies and azaleas will not thrive in full or complete shade. More shade promotes deeper green foliage but low light intensity also reduces flower bud set and produces a "leggier" (taller and gaunter) plant as it tries to find adequate sunshine.



Rhodies and azaleas can be pruned and shaped. A light pruning or shearing after flowering is especially good for evergreen azaleas. Standard rhodies can be shortened and made denser by pinching off single leaf buds on terminal shoots in spring. (Leaf buds tend to be narrower than flower buds which are comparatively broad and fat.) Removing terminal buds results in multiple leaf buds with more branches, leaves and ultimately more flowers. Many old established rhodies can be reduced drastically by hard pruning - cutting stems back by half right after flowering. Normally, plants treated this way should re-sprout vigorously, especially if you give them some extra fertilizer and water. You will lose flowering for a couple of years but you will end up with a much denser well-shaped plant. Ask one of the garden staff for more details on pruning. ■



This brochure is produced by Friends of Shore Acres, Inc. and distributed in cooperation with Shore Acres State Park. Text by George Guthrie, Landscape Maintenance Superintendent at Shore Acres. Brochure design and layout by Shirley Bridgham, Friends of Shore Acres Inc., and Anne Farrell-Matthews, South Coast Printing, Inc. For more information write to Friends of Shore Acres Inc., PO Box 1172, Coos Bay, OR 97420 or call 541-888-3732. [www.shoreacres.net](http://www.shoreacres.net)

**1** **Collection of rare "tree" rhodies** - very large leaves (up to 18" long!); native to Himalaya of China and India; some may eventually grow to 30' or more (ours are still young); require mild, moist "rain forest" conditions. Species planted are basilicum, montroseanum, and fictolacteum.

**2** **'Elizabeth'** - small to medium rhodie (6') with bright red flowers early (March-April); may bloom again in Sept.-Oct. when few other rhodies are in flower; compact in youth, tends to become more open and leggy as it ages, especially in shady conditions

**3** **'Loderi King George'** - large (often tree-like) rhodie with huge pinkish white fragrant flowers; late April to early June; very beautiful plant that requires "perfect" conditions of moisture and shelter from wind and sun to do well

**4** **'Loder's White'** - medium to large rhodie (10') with pink buds and white flowers in late April-May; compact well branched form; more tolerant of sun than similarly named but unrelated 'Loderi' hybrids

**5** **'Cynthia'** - large rhodie (12') with deep reddish pink flowers in April; a tough rhodie tolerant of sun and exposure here

**6** **'Taurus'** - Medium to large rhodie with bright red flowers and large leaves (a seedling of Jean Marie de Montague)

**7** **'Golden Gate'** - small to medium rhodie (5') with orange and pinkish red flowers in April-May; fairly compact bush

**8** **'Gumpo'** - evergreen azalea very dwarf (2') spreading plant; fine textured, rarely needs pruning; pink and white varieties available; an excellent dense ground-cover

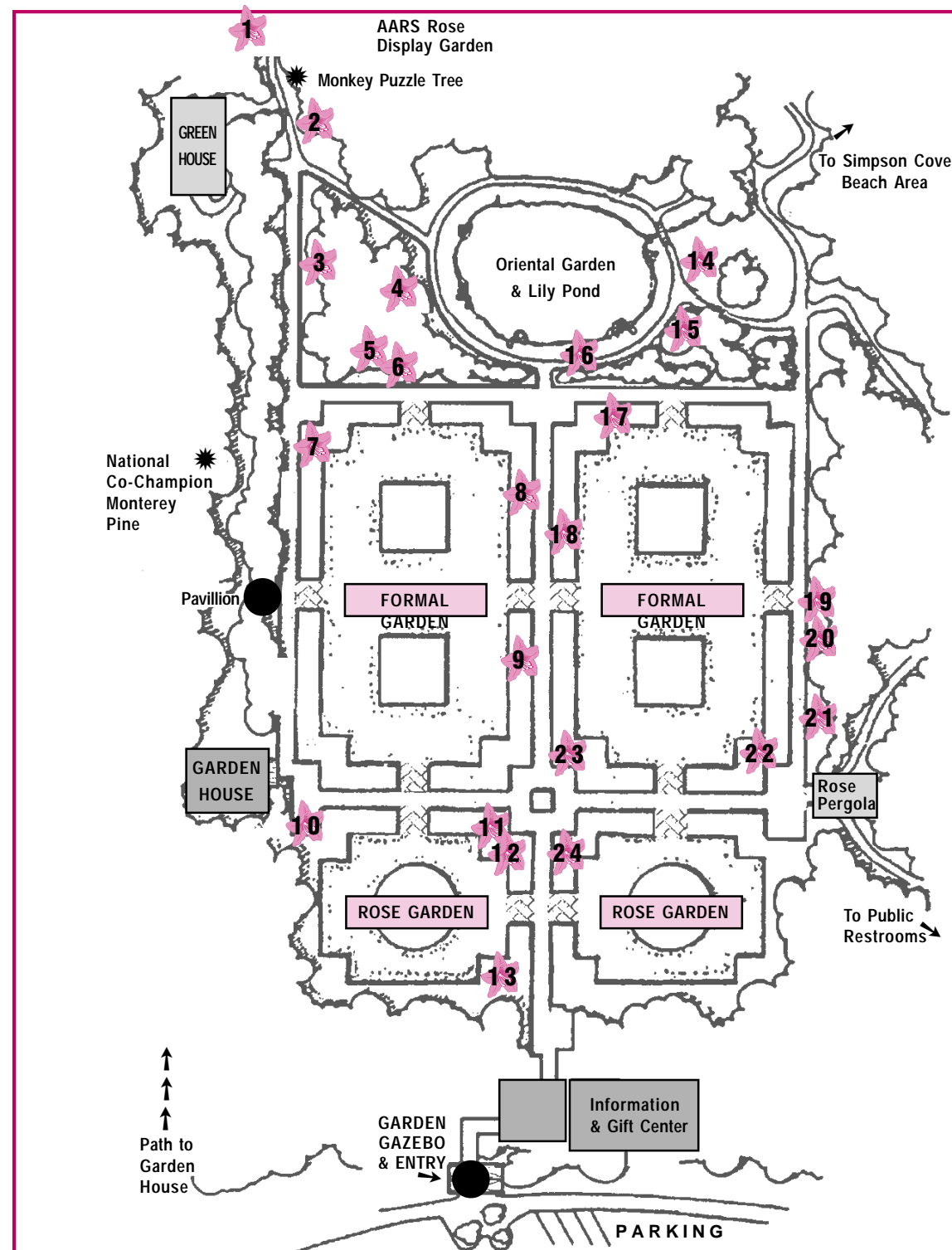
**9** **Hino-crimson** - low evergreen azalea (3'); **covers** itself with bright red flowers in March and early April; may show a few flowers as early as December or January; adapts well to shearing and shaping

**10** **'Anna Rose Whitney'** - medium to large rhodie (10') with deep pink flowers in May; vigorous but compact plant tolerant of sun here, but foliage best in some shade

**11** **'Mrs. Furnival'** - medium sized fairly compact rhodie (5'); pink flowered with showy dark blotch in mid April-May

**12** **Rhododendron yakushimanum** - very compact small-medium sized rhodie (5') pink buds opening to white in late April-May; leaves have an orange suede-like underside: new growth has a grayish 'peach-fuzz' like coating; outstanding in form, foliage and flower; the "parent" of many new hybrid rhodies

**13** **'Unique'** - medium to large rhodie (8') with pink buds opening to cream; March to April; excellent compact habit of growth requiring little pruning. In our area it is **not** a low



Numbers on the map match numbers on the plant list for approximate locations of plants in the garden. Flowering times are **average** for Shore Acres and may change due to seasonal weather variables.

growing plant as some nursery catalogs suggest.

**14** **Rhododendron occidentale** - our native "western azalea," - deciduous; medium to large (12'), pinkish white flowers with a yellowish blotch in May-June; very fragrant

**15** **Rhododendron ponticum** - tall rhodie (10') with purple flowers in May-June; very tolerant of coastal winds and salt spray; here used as a tall hedge; can be pruned severely

**16** **'Snow Lady'** - low compact rhodie (3') with white flowers very early (February-March)

**17** **'Jean Marie de Montague'** - medium to large rhodie (8') with bright red flowers in April; dark green foliage; one of the best red rhodies for the Pacific Northwest

**18** **'Everest'** - low growing evergreen azalea with white flowers May-June

**19** **'Sappho'** - large upright rhodie (10' or more); white flowers with a prominent purple blotch; striking in flower but needs regular pruning to be compact

**20** **'Pink Pearl'** - large rhodie (10' or more) with large clusters of bright pink flowers in May; tolerant of sun and exposure on the Oregon Coast

**21** **'Blue Peter'** - medium to tall rhodie (8') with showy light purple flowers with a dark blotch; needs pruning to remain dense and bushy

**22** **'Cecile'** - medium sized deciduous azalea with deep pink flowers (with a yellow flare) in May and June; sometimes puts out extra blooms in October and November; reddish fall color

**23** **'Kosters Brilliant Red'** - medium sized deciduous azalea (8'), bright red flowers in April; yellow red fall color

**24** **'Creole Belle'** - medium sized rhodie (6'); deep pinkish blue flowers in May; good foliage plant; tolerant of sun exposure on coast

