

**The Role of  
Laurelwood Gardens  
In East Coast  
Rhododendron Hybridizing**

*The John and Dorothy Knippenberg Legacy*



**R. 'Laurel Pink'**

**Laurelwood Arboretum  
Wayne, New Jersey**

*Friends of*  
**Laurelwood Arboretum**

*Connecting People with Nature*



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ON THE COVER: 'Laurel Pink' was hybridized and named by Dorothy Knippenberg. It was introduced commercially at Laurelwood Gardens and registered by her with the American Rhododendron Society in 1966. Photograph by Dorothy Knippenberg.

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Laurelwood Arboretum  
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## The Knippenberg Legacy

John and Dorothy Knippenberg purchased 30 acres of property across from their home in Pines Lake (Wayne, NJ) in the 1940's. Known as Laurelwood Gardens, it was an active commercial nursery that specialized in rhododendrons and azaleas. The Knippenbergs were widely known and respected for their many registered hybrids and their generosity to the local community. Dorothy studied and applied her horticultural skills to hybridizing unique rhododendron and azalea specimens and expanding her collection, as well as developing woodland, rock and display gardens throughout the property.



*Mrs. Knippenberg began hybridizing rhododendrons in 1955 and continues to strive for plants with new interests and improvements, such as hardy large-leafed sorts, with indumentum if possible, more flower substance and later blooming periods. Five hybrids, including 'Laurel Pink' and 'Big Mac', have been registered, while more than 25 others have been named while they continue under observation. ["Hybrids and Hybridizers, Rhododendrons and Azaleas for Eastern North America", Edited by Philip A. Livingston and Franklin H. West, Harrowood Books, 1978, p. 201.]*

In 1964, Dorothy Knippenberg invited a group of members of the New York Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society to visit Laurelwood Gardens by way of a slide program. She noted that the entire 30-acre site would become a public rhododendron park following her lifetime. For that reason, she explained that she and her husband, John, were trying to assemble masses of the hardiest varieties of rhododendrons.

The Knippenbergs maintained a test garden in which they planted rhododendron seedlings sent to them from all over the country to be subjected to the New Jersey climate and cultivated for east coast growers. At one point, they raised 6,000 Dexter seedlings on a hillside and 4,000 seedlings of 'La Bar's White'. Their exchange of seedlings and cuttings was not limited to east coast growers and hybridizers. In 1959, they visited Van Veen Nursery in Portland, Oregon and developed a business relationship and friendship with Ted Van Veen that lasted their lifetimes. They frequently sold thousands of rhododendron cuttings raised at Laurelwood to Van Veen Nursery. They often loaded six or more truckloads a week with rhododendrons and azaleas that were grown at Laurelwood Gardens and shipped to other growers.

John and Dorothy helped continue the legacy of such renowned hybridizers as Charles O. Dexter, one of the first to undertake a massive hybridizing program in Sandwich, Massachusetts; Joseph B. Gable, who made rhododendron hybridizing look deceptively simple at his nursery in Stewartstown, Pennsylvania; and G. Guy Nearing, who developed many hardy hybrids at his nursery in Ramsey, New Jersey. The arboretum's rhododendron collection now includes more than 400 rhododendrons, many hybridized by these early pioneers.

The Knippenbergs also operated a nursery on the eastern shore of Virginia where they raised hundreds of young rhododendrons in the warmer climate before transporting them to Laurelwood Gardens in Wayne. They had eight cultivars of rhododendron registered with the American Rhododendron Society and the Royal Horticultural Society. These hybrids included 'Blush Button' (1966), 'Caroline Gem' (1967), 'Hardy Giant' (1966), 'Big Mac' (1977), 'Burgundy Cherry' (1980), 'Laurel Pink' (1966), 'Laurelwood Snow Bunting' (1988) and 'Wayne Pink' (1966). Over the years, they raised and/or hybridized approximately 50 new rhododendron cultivars.

After the death of John, the property was deeded to the Township of Wayne and became part of the township's park system.

At this time, a small grassroots community group formed to support Dorothy in maintaining the property and ensuring its future as a public park. In 2003, this group was formalized as Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation.

After Dorothy's death in 2006, a formal partnership was formed between Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum and the Township of Wayne. The organization assumed responsibility for maintaining and improving the arboretum's horticultural inheritance. This included managing designated public funds and Laurelwood's seasonal employees and volunteers.

## **About Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum**

Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum has more than 400 members. The Executive Committee manages the arboretum and administers the operating and capital budgets. A part-time Executive Director supervises three seasonal employees and coordinates the activities of more than 200 volunteers., many of whom are certified Rutgers Master Gardeners.

A group of volunteers works Tuesdays and Fridays from April through October weeding, pruning, mulching, deadheading and planting. A greenhouse volunteer group works Mondays and Fridays throughout the winter propagating and maintaining plants for seasonal displays in our propagation greenhouse, which is the only one of the remaining six propagation houses that existed on the site during the Knippenberg years.

The Horticultural Manager, Head Gardener and Assistant Gardener, and the many volunteers, are responsible for the general maintenance of the arboretum including weeding, pruning, removal of brush and leaves, dividing and transplanting plants, spreading mulch and woodchips, fertilization and irrigation of plants, and spraying to prevent deer damage.

The Board of Directors oversees the management and operation of the Knippenberg Center for Education and the adjacent Educational Greenhouse, where hands-on horticultural demonstrations and workshops are conducted.

## East Coast Hybridizers

Rhododendron hybridizing began in the United States before 1860. This booklet includes information on several early East Coast hybridizers who had a direct or indirect connection to Laurelwood Gardens and John and Dorothy Knippenberg.

**Charles O. Dexter (1862-1943)**, was a patrician New England industrialist. He was one of the first to undertake a massive rhododendron breeding program at his estate in Sandwich, Massachusetts. It is unclear how he became interested in rhododendrons. A dire health prediction at the age of 59 led him to purchase his estate, known as Shawme Farm. Despite the health warning, he lived another 22 years and spent summers at the farm, where he began growing blueberries and vegetables and hybridizing plants. He hired a landscape architect who planted many rhododendrons throughout his estate, and it is likely that Dexter became attracted to these beautiful plants.

Although he was a great hybridizer, Dexter was a poor record keeper. It was not until after his death that his work as a hybridizer was recognized. Between 1925 and 1940, he produced more than 5,000 crosses a year. He rarely kept written records of his crosses. He used his own numbering system to identify his seedlings that were given to friends and to arboretums. Unfortunately, many of his seedlings were widely dispersed before they had been properly evaluated. His hybrids were not publicly offered for sale during his lifetime.

Dexter's early reputation probably suffered because he did not wait to see his seedlings bloom or evaluate them before distributing them. After his death, the Dexter Study Committee was formed to try to determine which promising varieties of his hybrids were still growing in various gardens. The committee worked from 1945 to 1953 trying to locate and evaluate the many Dexter plants growing in gardens along the eastern seaboard. The original group members included Henry Skinner, then the Horticulturalist of the Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia; Paul Vossberg, then Propagator at the Westbury Rose

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Company in Long Island; John Wister, then Director of the Arthur Scott Horticultural Foundation at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania; and Donald Wyman, then Horticulturalist at the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard University in Boston, Massachusetts.

The committee visited two dozen gardens where Dexter seedlings were being grown. They obtained more than 200 cuttings, including 16 cuttings from Dexter plants found at the New York Botanical Gardens. Some of the cuttings were taken and rooted by Paul Vossberg, who had developed an interest in rhododendrons as a young man working at Hicks Nursery on Long Island.



**R. 'Burgundy Cherry'**

Although the committee did not visit Laurelwood Gardens, several of Dexter's numbered seedlings were known to be growing there. In 1979, the former Horticulturalist at Heritage Plantation in Sandwich wrote to Dorothy Knippenberg trying to obtain cuttings from the last few Dexter cultivars not represented in the collection at Heritage Gardens. Dorothy supplied several cuttings from Dexter rhododendrons to the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society.

In 1959, Dorothy Knippenberg received an award for her "unnamed Dexter hybrid," known as Dexter #108, at the New York—New Jersey Flower Show. Dexter #108 was later named 'Harwich' by Swarthmore College. During her program given to members of the New York Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society in 1964, Mrs. Knippenberg showed photographs of several Dexter plants growing in Laurelwood Gardens, including Dexter #105 ('Burgundy Cherry'), Dexter #109 ('Great Eastern'), Dexter #12507-2 ('Red Velvet'), and Dexter #12507-6

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(‘Avondale’). Code numbers #105, #108, and #109 were original Dexter numbers.

Years after Dexter’s death, Dorothy Knippenberg was credited with naming several of his hybrids including ‘Burgundy Cherry’, ‘Great Eastern’, ‘Pink Satin’ and ‘Powder Puff’. The Dexter Garden at Laurelwood Arboretum includes many of his mature hybrids, some of which are more than 50 years old, including ‘Scintillation’, ‘Avondale’, ‘Dexter’s Appleblossom’, ‘Dexter’s Pink Satin’, ‘Parker’s Pink’, ‘Westbury’, ‘Dorothy Russell’ and ‘Lavender Princes’.

Dexter’s estate is now operated as the Heritage Museums and Gardens, which contains plantings of 125 of the known 145 Dexter cultivars.

**G. Guy Nearing (1890-1986)** had a strong connection to Laurelwood Gardens. He opened a nursery at Arden, Delaware in 1928, and he quickly became a recognized expert on hollies. In 1929, Guyencourt Nurseries in Delaware absorbed his nursery, and together they began to propagate rhododendrons on a large scale. During this period, he invented and patented the Nearing Propagation Frame, which was a structure designed to create an atmosphere of continuous humidity in indirect light. The Nearing Frame was used by many nurseries including Laurelwood Gardens.

In 1930, Nearing started his voluminous correspondence with fellow pioneer hybridizer Joseph Gable, which spanned a period of more than two decades.

After the dissolution of Guyencourt Nurseries, Nearing started a small nursery in Ridgewood, NJ where he undertook hybridizing on a large scale. Hundreds of crosses were made and tens of thousands of plants were grown in an attempt to isolate forms that would be hardy in the New Jersey climate. Unfortunately, a flash flood destroyed his nursery in 1945, and he worked for the next several years as a resident naturalist at

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Greenbrook Sanctuary located on the Palisades in Alpine and Tenafly, NJ. In 1947, he opened a nursery in Ramsey, NJ where he continued hybridizing rhododendrons. Nearing's prime interest was the creation of beautiful and hardy rhododendrons for our east coast climate. The Knippenbergs sent him pollen, and he often sent the results of his crosses to them to raise at Laurelwood Gardens.

A Nearing Study Group was formed to evaluate, propagate and distribute hybrids of Nearing plants, many of which were grown in Laurelwood Gardens. Dr. Al Fitzburgh, former chairman of the Nearing Study Group, submitted a letter of nomination of Nearing for the Pioneer Award, which was awarded to Nearing by the American Rhododendron Society. Dr. Fitzburgh is a former Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum President and currently advises the rhododendron study team at Laurelwood.

Today, the arboretum still includes a number of rhododendrons introduced by Guy Nearing including 'Cliff Garland', 'Mary Fleming', 'Ramapo', 'Rochelle', 'Windbeam' and 'Wyanokie' as well as several of his Guyencourt hybrids including 'Brandywine', 'Chesapeake' and 'Lenape.'

**Joseph B. Gable (1886-1972)** produced rhododendrons and azaleas with finer flowers and tougher plants at his nursery in Stewartstown, Pennsylvania. For over 40 years, he experimented with rhododendrons and azaleas, trying to raise rare species and create new hybrids. He obtained seed and pollen from many sources. He aspired, as did his friend Guy Nearing, to create the great all-American red rhododendron.

Several of Gable's early creations found their way to Laurelwood Gardens. Gable's 'Jacksonii #5' and 'Jacksonii #6,' which were grown from seed he obtained from Dr. Charles S. Sargent, the first director of Arnold Arboretum at Harvard in 1926, were discussed by Dorothy Knippenberg during her 1964 presentation to the New York rhododendron chapter. 'Jacksonii #5' was a synonym of 'Strawberry Swirl', which was hybridized in 1947

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and named by Warren Baldsiefen.

Although we have found no evidence that Gable ever visited Laurelwood Gardens, we know from the voluminous correspondence between Joe Gable and Guy Nearing over the years that he was aware of the Knippenberg propagation efforts. In discussing cutting methods with Gable in a 1953 letter, Nearing stated that “Knippenberg, who buys thousands of them (cuttings)...gets better results from these Baldsiefen roots.” In a January 1956 letter to Gable, Nearing commented that, “John Knippenberg was preparing many acres of ground” and he has “countless thousands of seedlings coming along to plant there. He can carry them through to maturity as Dexter did.”

Gable named some of his hybrids after family members. His ‘Caroline’ was named for his daughter, Caroline. It was used by Dorothy Knippenberg as a “parent” for her ‘Caroline Gem’, which she raised at Laurelwood Gardens in 1955. Gable’s ‘Mary Belle’ was named for his wife, the former Mary Belle Dalton. Both of these named hybrids still grow in Laurelwood today.

Today, the arboretum is home to many Gable rhododendrons including ‘Caroline’, ‘Conewago Improved’, ‘County of York’, ‘David Gable’, ‘Cadis’, ‘Mary Belle’ and ‘Catalgla’, as well as many of his azaleas.

**Paul Vossberg (1896-1974)** of Westbury, Long island joined the Westbury Rose Company in 1943, where he perfected a method of successfully rooting cuttings of rhododendron varieties previously difficult or impossible to root. He was a member of the original Dexter Study Committee, and he was a charter member of the New York Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, where he started a friendship with John and Dorothy Knippenberg. He is credited with naming several Dexter hybrids such as ‘Scintillation’, ‘Westbury’, and ‘Wheatley’, which were introduced commercially by the Westbury Rose Company. These named rhododendrons still grow in Laurelwood Arboretum. In 1959, Vossberg visited Van Veen Nursery

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in Portland, Oregon, with John and Dorothy Knippenberg, which was the beginning of a life-long business relationship between Van Veen Nursery and Laurelwood Gardens, as well as a friendship between Ted Van Veen and John and Dorothy. Vossberg became a close friend of Dorothy Knippenberg, and he visited Laurelwood Gardens at least once a year. In 1965, he gave a small 15-inch unnamed rhododendron hybrid to Dorothy to propagate at Laurelwood Gardens. She grew the plant to its first flower and named it 'Paul Vossberg'. It was introduced commercially at Laurelwood Gardens in 1975.



Dorothy registered the new named hybrid with

**R. 'Paul Vossberg'**

the American Rhododendron Society in 1994. The original 'Paul Vossberg' rhododendron still grows in Laurelwood Arboretum and can be seen on Ridge Road. A second one is located at the south end of Dorothy's Way in the arboretum.

**Nathaniel Hess (1907-2001)** helped to found the New York Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society in 1951 and served as its President from 1957 to 1960. John and Dorothy Knippenberg were active members of the New York Chapter. He often welcomed visitors to his garden of rhododendrons in Sands Point, New York. He introduced many west coast classic rhododendrons to our cold east coast climate. He showed that the tempering effect of Long Island Sound favored the culture of a large collection of exotic rhododendron varieties, including several English varieties. In 1972, he used a 'Scintillation'

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seedling, open pollinated, to create a new hybrid that he named 'Dorothy Knippenberg', which was registered in 1992 with the American Horticultural Society. The new elpidote rhododendron was white with moderate reddish orange dorsal spotting.

**Warren Baldsiefen (1922-1974)** started his nursery in Rochelle Park, NJ in 1964. He soon outgrew its location, and he moved it to Paramus, NJ before finally settling in Bellvale, New York. The Dexter cuttings that became 'Burgundy Cherry' and 'Dexter's Pink Satin' were purchased from his nursery by Dorothy Knippenberg in a collection of numbered Dexters purchased as rooted cuttings. Over the years, she purchased hundreds of rooted cuttings from the nursery. Her named hybrid 'Laurel Pink' was available for sale at the nursery at one time.

Although he was not an east coast hybridizer, west coast hybridizer Ted Van Veen is included in this booklet due to his special and longstanding connection to the Knippenbergs and Laurelwood Gardens.

**Ted Van Veen (1916-2003)** took over the management of Van Veen Nursery in Portland, Oregon upon his father's death in 1961. The nursery became one of the largest purveyors of rhododendrons in the nation by the early 1970's. In 1969, the publication of his book, *Rhododendrons in America*, was the first how-to book for the lay person. It was an instant hit in the United States. In 1959, the Knippenbergs visited Van Veen Nursery and met Theodore Van Veen, Ted's father. In 1966, Ted Van Veen wrote to Dorothy Knippenberg to inquire about the availability of hardy varieties of rhododendrons. It was the start of a lifelong business relationship and friendship. In reply to his inquiry, Dorothy shipped him cuttings from 'Scintillation' and 'Wheatley', which were growing at Laurelwood Gardens. Ted Van Veen visited Laurelwood Gardens in 1976, and over the decades, thousands of cuttings from rhododendrons growing at Laurelwood Gardens were sold and shipped to Van Veen Nursery.

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Upon Ted's passing in 2003, his daughter, Kathy Van Veen, took over the management of Van Veen Nursery. Laurelwood continued its long history with Van Veen Nursery. In 2015, our rhododendron study team shipped 25 cuttings from its newly named 'Laurelwood Sunset' evergreen azalea to Van Veen Nursery for custom propagation. The cuttings were rooted by Kathy Van Veen, and the young plants were returned to the arboretum in 2017 where they were potted and will be planted in the arboretum. Sadly, Kathy Van Veen passed away in 2016.

**Dorothy Knippenberg (1910-2006)** began hybridizing rhododendrons in 1955 at Laurelwood Gardens, and she continued to strive for plants with new interests and improvements, such as hardy large-leaved sorts, more flower substance and later-blooming periods.

Together with her husband, John, they operated two nurseries: one at Laurelwood Gardens and a second one on the Virginia eastern shore. They maintained a test garden and subjected many west coast plants to the New Jersey climate. They cultivated more than 50 new named rhododendron hybrids. Hundreds of



**R. 'Carolina Rose'**

*Photo by Dorothy Knippenberg*

rhododendrons raised at Laurelwood Gardens were recognized with awards at annual flower shows. In 1976, her 'Carolina Rose' was awarded First Place at the National Flower Show of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Dorothy named and introduced 'Carolina Rose' commercially at Laurelwood Gardens. It still grows in the arboretum today. Her 'Powder Puff' received a Second Place award at the show. 'Carolina Rose' was also awarded First Place at the annual flower show of the ARS Princeton Chapter in 1979.

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Several of Dorothy's other named hybrids were recognized at the ARS Princeton Chapter flower shows including 'Blush Button' Second Place (1969), 'Topaz' Second Place (1969), 'Big Mac' First Place (1970), 'Red Velvet' First Place (1973) and 'Ivory Cloud' First Place (1976). In 1973, she was presented the Bronze Medal Award by the New York Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society in appreciation for her devotion to the Genus *Rhododendron*.

Dorothy Knippenberg was a graduate of Pratt Institute, NY. She worked with her husband, John, at their family business, Country Club Ice Cream Company in Paterson, NJ, where she designed the logos for the company. After the Knippenbergs purchased the 30-acre property in the 1940's, now known as Laurelwood Arboretum, she became a knowledgeable horticulturalist who encouraged others to see the beauty of rhododendrons and to enjoy growing them. She believed in sharing her knowledge with others whether they were amateur gardeners, west coast or east coast hybridizers, rhododendron hobbyists, visitors to the arboretum, school children, or volunteers. Dorothy expressed her vision for the arboretum in 1964, when during a visit to Laurelwood Gardens by members of the American Rhododendron Society, she stated that Laurelwood Gardens would, "*become a public rhododendron park following our lifetime.*"

Dorothy's work and vision continue at Laurelwood Arboretum. A rhododendron study team was named by the Board of Directors in 2015. Much like the study committees formed in the names of some of the pioneer hybridizers, the study team at Laurelwood was charged with the responsibility of identifying and evaluating the rhododendrons growing in the arboretum. The volunteer team helped to develop a computerized record-keeping system and database to record data on each rhododendron, and it is trying to locate the many missing Knippenberg hybrids that may be growing in private and public gardens in an effort to return them, if possible, to Laurelwood Arboretum.

# Knippenberg Rhododendrons

[Source: International Rhododendron Registrar, Royal Horticultural Society]

The named hybrids listed below were either hybridized, raised, grown or named by Dorothy and John Knippenberg. The list includes the eight hybrids registered by them with the American Rhododendron Society and the Royal Horticultural Society.

(r) **'Amber'** R, N

(r) **'Bayberry'** R, N

(r) **'Big Mac'** cv. Elepidote rhododendron : 'La Bar's White' (s) × *macabeanum* H: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1955), G: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, I: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1968), REG: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1977) Flowers pale-greenish yellow with a dark red blotch.

(r) **'Big Willy'** cv. Elepidote rhododendron : 'La Bar's White' × *williamsianum* R: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (pre 1985), N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, I: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg Flowers white.

(r) **'Bittersweet'** R, N

(r) **'Blueblood'** R,N

(r) **'Blush Button'** cv. Elepidote rhododendron : 'C.O.D.' × 'Dexter's Honeydew' R: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (pre 1966), N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, I: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, REG: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1966) Flowers shaded coral red in bud, opening egyptian buff (407/1).

(r) **'Burgundy Cherry'** cv. Parentage unknown H: C.O. Dexter (pre 1943), G: C.O. Dexter, N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, I: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1974), REG: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1980) Flowers carmine (21/3) with doge purple (732) at base of throat and in a dorsal blotch.

(r) **'Buttercup'** R, N

(r) **'Butterscotch'** R, N

(r) **'Candleglow'** R, N

(r) **'Candlelight'** R, N

(az) **Carolina Rose Group** gp Azaleodendron : *minus* Carolinianum Group (s) × *prinophyllum* H: D.L. Hardgrove (pre 1946), N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, I: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg Flowers pink (though shade can be variable). Lvs evergreen. Habit varying from open to dense. Essentially looks like an evergreen *prinophyllum*.

(r) **'Caroline Gem'** cv. Elepidote rhododendron : Elizabeth Group × 'Caroline' H: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1955), G: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1966), N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, I: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, REG: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1967) Flowers with buds carmine rose (621) opening (621/2) with a slight coral flush.



**R. 'Big Mac'**

*Photo by Dorothy Knippenberg*

# Knippenberg Rhododendrons

(r) **'Carved Ivory'** R, N

(r) **'Constance'** R, N

(r) **'Copperside'** R, N

(r) **'Coral'** R, N

(r) **'Cranberry'** R, N

(r) **'Crepe Myrtle'** R,N

(r) **'Dexter's Red Velvet'** cv. Elepidote rhododendron : 'Pygmalion' × *haematodes* × 'Wellfleet', exact combination unknown H: C.O. Dexter (pre 1943), G: Scott Arboretum, N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (pre 1972), I: Laurelwood Nursery (pre 1972), REG: Princeton Chapter Study Group (1997) Flowers bright crimson red without a blue undertone, with a dark greyish purple (201A) spotted flare extending from throat to near the margin of the dorsal lobe.

(r) **'Dexter's Ruby Heart'** N, I

(r) **'Firepink'** H

(r) **'Great Eastern'** cv. Elepidote rhododendron : probably a subsect. *Fortunea* hybrid H: C.O. Dexter (pre 1943), G: C.O. Dexter, N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, REG: Scott Arboretum (1983) Flowers deep purplish pink , paling to light purplish pink and pale purplish pink toward centre, with four dorsal rays of strong greenish yellow and faint dorsal spotting of brilliant greenish yellow becoming more-or-less solid near the rays.

(r) **'Hardy Giant'** cv. Elepidote rhododendron : *fortunei* × *rex* subsp. *Fictolacteum* H: D.L. Hardgrove, G: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1953), N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, I: Laurelwood Gardens (1966), REG: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1966) Flowers light yellow (10B), with a raspberry-colored blotch.

(r) **'Ivory Cloud'** H

(r) **'Jackpot'** H

(r) **'June Rose'** R

(r) **'Knee High'** R, N

(r) **'Laurel Pink'** cv. Elepidote rhododendron : 'Boule de Neige' (s) × *catawbiense*

× F.C. Puddle Group R: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, I: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (pre 1966), REG: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1966) Flowers neyron rose (623) in bud, opening 623/3.

(r) **'Laurelwood Snow Bunting'** cv. Lepidote rhododendron : *mucronulatum* (Vossberg's pink selection) × Bric-à-brac Group H: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1960), G: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1963), N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, REG: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (1988) Flowers rose madder (23/2) in bud, opening 23/3, fading to white; pistil pink; filaments white, anthers black. Syn: 'Snow Bunting' (First published in Roslyn Nursery cat., 1988)

(r) **'Mariposa'** H

(r) **'Maybell'** H

(r) **'Maywood'** H



**R. 'Hardy Giant'**

*Photo by Dorothy Knippenberg*

# Knippenberg Rhododendrons

- (r) **'Moondrop'** H  
(r) **'Moonflower'** H  
(r) **'New Hope'** H  
(r) **'Our Choice'** H  
(r) **'Paul Vossberg'** cv. Elepidote rhododendron : thought to be *maximum* × *thomsonii* H: P.D. Vossberg (1960-1965), G: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg, I: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (c 1975), REG: ICRA (1994) Flowers strong red (53B), with a dark garnet red blotch on the dorsal lobe.  
(r) **'Persimmon'** H  
(r) **'Platinum'** H  
(r) **'Powder Puff'** cv. Parentage unknown H: C.O. Dexter (pre 1943), N: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (pre 1978), I: Mrs J.F. Knippenberg (pre 1978) Flowers lavender pink in bud, opening nearly white.  
(r) **'Red Flag'** H  
(r) **'Ripe Peach'** H  
(r) **'Silverside'** H  
(r) **'Splash'** H  
(r) **'Springfield'** H  
(r) **'Springwood Pink'** H  
(r) **'Springwood White'** H  
(r) **'Sterling'** H  
(r) **'Topaz'** H  
(r) **'Topps'** H  
(r) **'Wayne Pink'** cv. Elepidote rhododendron : Dexter hybrid (s) × unknown G: J.F. Knippenberg (1953), N: J.F. Knippenberg, I: J.F. Knippenberg, REG: J.F. Knippenberg (1966) Flowers spiraea red.  
(r) **'Wisteria'** H  
(r) **'Yellow Jack'**



**R. 'Wayne Pink'**

*Photo by Dorothy Knippenberg*

## Legend:

(az) = Azaleodendron

(r) = Rhododendron

H = Hybridized by

G = Grown to first flower

R = Raised by

N = Named by

I – Introduced commercially by

REG = Registered by

## Rhododendrons in the Home Landscape

There are rhododendrons of all sizes, making it possible to incorporate them in any landscape provided care is taken in plant selection, planting location, soil conditions, drainage, and irrigation. In selecting a plant for your property, consideration should be given to the mature height of the rhododendron. They grow in all sizes and shapes from low-growing, spreading plants to medium-sized shrubs to tree-size plants. It is important to select rhododendrons that are suitable for your home landscape.

Choose locations that mitigate extreme temperature changes, especially in spring and fall, and provide protection from drying summer or winter winds. Large-leaf rhododendrons are less tolerant of sun and wind than small-leaf rhododendrons. Light shade is preferred, but morning sunlight with shade in the afternoon is satisfactory. Generally, the east and north sides of the house are better locations than the west and south.

Fall or early spring are the best times for planting. Rhododendrons do not tolerate water-saturated soil conditions. They will not survive in wet, poorly drained soil. Select a planting location that contains moist, well-drained soil conditions. The soil should be acidic with pH between 4.5 and 6.0. If you are unsure of the soil conditions, contact your local agricultural extension office to purchase a soil test.

Most rhododendrons are purchased with soil around the roots, either in containers or balled and burlapped. Plants should be thoroughly watered prior to planting, and roots should be loosened. Using a knife, make vertical cuts two inches or more deep equally spaced around the root ball, gently loosening the roots where cuts were made. The top of the root ball should never be below the level of the surrounding soil. Mulching helps to keep the soil moist and cool. Mulch around the plant at least to the drip line but do not pile mulch right up to the trunk of the plant.

Rhododendrons have very fine, shallow roots. The root zone may dry out during the hot season. Plants should be well watered during hot months especially the first year after planting. A water-stressed plant is more susceptible to insect and disease attacks.

For more information on plant care, visit [rhododendron.org/plantcare.htm](http://rhododendron.org/plantcare.htm).

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## Our Rhododendron Collection

The Rhododendron Study Team at Laurelwood Arboretum has set a goal of identifying and tagging the rhododendron collection. We estimate there are 500—600 rhododendrons in the arboretum. To date, the study team volunteers have identified 254 rhododendrons. Detailed information on each rhododendron has been entered into a computerized plant collection management database. Each record includes the rhododendron name, flower color, flower and truss description, growth habit, foliage description, name of hybridizer, bloom time, and its location in the arboretum. The record also includes a photograph of the bloom. Each rhododendron was assigned a unique accession number. A permanent aluminum plant tag has been affixed to each rhododendron. The following named hybrids and species have been identified to date.

'Alena'	'Gertrude Saxe'	
'America'	'Henry's Red'	'Tow Head'
'American Beauty'	'Ignatius Sargent'	'Van Nes Sensation'
'Atroflo'	'Janet Blair'	'Vulcan's Flame'
'Avondale'	'La Bar's White'	'Westbury'
'Babylon'	'Lavender Princess'	'Weston's Aglo'
'Boule de Neige'	'Lee's Best Purple'	'Wheatley'
'Brandywine'	'Lenape'	'Windbeam'
'Brookville'	'Mary Belle'	
'Cadis'	'Mary Fleming'	
'Calsap'	'Molly Fordham'	
'Carolina Rose'	'Nadia'	<i>Species</i>
'Caroline'	'Nova Zembla'	<i>carolinianum</i>
'Catalgla'	'Olga Mezitt'	<i>catawbiense</i>
'Catawbiense Album'	'Parker's Pink'	<i>hyperythrum</i>
'Chesapeake'	'Paul Vossberg'	<i>keiskei</i>
'Christmas Cheer'	'Pink Pearl'	<i>metternichii</i>
'Cliff Garland'	'Pioneer Silvery Pink'	<i>mucronulatum</i>
'Cornell Pink'	'PJM'	<i>schlippenbachii</i>
'County of York'	'Purpureum Elegans'	<i>williamsianum</i>
'David Gable'	'Rochelle'	<i>yakushmanum</i>
'Dexter's Pink Satin'	'Rosey Future'	
'Dexter's Appleblossom'	'Scintillation'	
'Dorothy Russell'	'Solidarity'	
'English Roseum'		