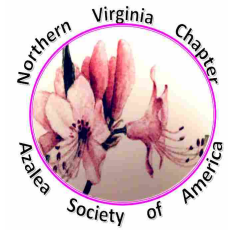


# The Azalea Clipper

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Published 1980-2010 by Frances and Phil Louer  
Northern Virginia Chapter Azalea Society of America



**The Klimavicz Garden at Meadowlark Gardens** is now a reality. **Barb Kirkwood** came up with the concept and contacted Meadowlark. Later, she, **Carolyn** and **Paul Beck**, and **Rick Bauer** negotiated with the Garden's staff to present a display of **Joseph Klimavicz's** hybrid evergreen azaleas. After details were covered in a Memorandum of Understanding, volunteers worked on the site twice this spring. Turning out in their "finest" were the **Becks**, **Lars Larson**, **Rick** and **Susan Bauer**, **Joe Gutierrez**, **Mike White** (center above), **Dave Nanney**, **Don Hyatt**, **Anne Marie** and **Marianna McKinnon** (left above), **Joanne** and **Dan Neckel** (center above), **Richard Mohr**, **Dick Cecka**, and **Fred Newlan** (worker and photographer). As the garden matures through the years, it will be a centerpiece of Meadowlark's spring portfolio!

**NEXT CHAPTER MEETING: SUNDAY JULY 14 1:00 - 4:30**

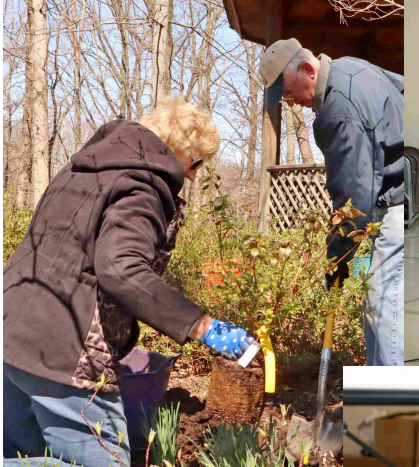
*Cutting Exchange Kirkwood Presbyterian Church*

*Plant Exchange too!* Please label cuttings and plants, and sign your name

**Refreshments: Everyone bring potluck**      **Directions on back page**

## *Check Inside!*

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**p. 7 Merritt funeral, Louer plants, plant sales success**



## *President's Message*

Summer is finally upon us and there's plenty to do and see outdoors!

For those that haven't been to Meadowlark Gardens yet, a trip there to assist in keeping our Klimavicz azaleas looking good is a frequent opportunity. Stay tuned for the next scheduled work day!

Our annual cutting exchange will be on July 14<sup>th</sup>, providing the opportunity to start some new azaleas in your collections, socialize, catch up on the latest chapter efforts, and even do some serious snacking!

The chapter continues to thrive with the dedicated efforts of our members, but I would ask each of you to see if you can find an activity you could assist with to help share the effort. We have a wonderful group of members that are great folks to know and share experiences with.

I thank all of the individuals who have dedicated time and effort to make this one of the most successful years to date. Great work by all! See you all soon,

Lars

If you're concerned about our new foreign invasive, **Japanese Stiltgrass**, **Lars** has an article about it, too long for this Clipper. Some herbicides are effective if you've gotten tired of pulling out the grass by hand.

Preemergence Herbicides

**Trifluralin** (tradenames include **Preen Garden Weed Preventer®** and **Treflan®**)

Postemergence Herbicides for landscape beds

**Glyphosate and Glufosinate** (various trade names); **Sethoxydim** (tradenname **Bonide**); **Fluazifop-P-Butyl** (**Ortho**); **Fenoxaprop** (trade name **Acclaim Extra** and **Bayer Crabgrass Killer for Lawns**)

Contact **Lars** for a detailed pdf.

## *The Cheapskate Gardener*

**Lars** presents some ideas which would be useful anytime, from early spring, on:

As you get back into the garden it's a good time to check how it fared over the winter, and from the unprecedented rains of last year.

Our heavy rains moved soils down slope, eroded areas, bared root balls, and striped away topsoil. Some reconstruction and backfilling may be needed. If peonies have to endure more rains that cause their heavy blooms to flop over, a solution might be to use wire mesh (used in

concrete sidewalks, floors and driveways) to cage them. Often concrete work projects will have remnants of rolls that work great, with their thicker wire that can support the plants while having wide 4-6 inch mesh that minimizes their presence.

And, before you leave the garden, don't forget to clean out your bird houses to be ready for the new nesting season. Encouraging the birds to live near your plants will help control your insect problems!

**Captions:** *photos by Sperling (S), Newlan (N) – p. 2* l to r, top – bot: Anne Marie & Marianna, Joe, Paul, Carolyn, Dave, Rick, Susan, Don, Joanne (all N), group and Diane (S), Mike, Barbara, Judy, Charlie, George (N); *p. 5 -6 and top 2 on p. 7 (Calendulaceum on Hooper Bald, Roan Mtn.) by Hyatt*

## *Second Annual Graham County Native Azalea Festival by Rick Bauer*

Over the past 11 years, members of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS), the Azalea Society of America (ASA) and other groups, have worked on Hooper Bald in the Nantahala Forest in Graham County, NC to promote and preserve the azaleas native to the area. This effort, led by ASA members Jim Brant and George McLellan, earned them both the ASA Distinguished Service Award last year. Additionally, the azaleas on Hooper Bald became the primary impetus for Graham County, NC holding their first Native Azalea Festival last year.



*Rick at NVASA booth. Photo by Susan Bauer.*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Native Azalea Festival was held this year on 13-14 June in Robbinsville, NC. The first day of the festival was focused on the azaleas on Hooper Bald. Members of the ASA and Partners of the Joyce Kilmer Slickrock Wilderness conducted tours of the beautiful azalea specimens on the bald, including varieties such as Best Red and Hooper Copper.

The evening's events were held at the Stecoah Valley Center. The center is housed in a former school which was built in 1916 and taken out of service in 1994. It has been repurposed into a cultural arts center. This evening's focus was on the native Cherokee Indians. The evening started with a dinner including typical Cherokee dishes, followed by a performance by a group of Indian dancers. It was a very educational and entertaining evening.

Saturday's events started with additional hikes on the bald in the morning. The afternoon's events were centered in Robbinsville where 40 vendors offered various varieties of food, crafts and plants for sale to the public. The Northern Virginia Chapter sold native azaleas as well as other deciduous hybrids and sold out of all of the plants brought to the festival. The evening's events consisted of music performed on a stage in front of the Graham County Courthouse.

This year's event was an expansion of the first festival. Hopefully it will continue to expand. A major impetus for the festival is the work done on Hooper Bald. I know that some of our chapter members have been involved in this effort. Thank you.

## ***Native Azalea Trips, June 2019***

***By Don Hyatt***

Our annual trek to the Southern Appalachians was supposed to last from June 9 to 19 but we often have to adjust our plans due to the weather conditions and what is in bloom. There was very heavy rain along the East Coast on Sunday (6/9) so we decided to cancel the first stop on this year's tip. We would miss some native azaleas and rhododendrons as well as the entertaining herd of wild ponies at Mount Rogers and Grayson Highlands. We delayed our departure by one day and then convened in Mountain City, TN, on Monday (6/10).

We frequently use Mountain City as "base camp" when we visit a number of scenic locations in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. There are many nearby attractions. We usually stay there for at least three days but that is not enough time to see everything in the region. Our primary focus, however, is usually Roan Mountain.

Roan is surely one of the most beautiful spots in the entire Appalachian Mountains. Each year we try to decide which day promises to have the best weather and that is when we will hike along a very scenic section of the Appalachian Trail through the Roan Highlands. If conditions are just right and the weather is clear, not only will we see meadows filled with native azaleas, rhododendrons, and wildflowers, but we will also have breathtaking 360-degree views of the mountains. To me, it is perfection!

The heavy weekend rains dropped from 3 to 13 inches in Western North Carolina causing



*Rick Bauer, George McLellan and 'Best Red' – photo  
by Susan Bauer*

significant flooding in many areas. On Monday, a cold front finally pushed that mess off the coast so we decided that Tuesday, June 11, looked like the best day for our hike to Roan.

Yes, it was a spectacular day... blue skies, cool breezes, and perfect visibility. Unfortunately, most of the purple rhododendrons, *R. catawbiense*, which cover many of the peaks on Roan had their delicate blossoms stripped off by heavy rains. However, the flame azaleas, *R. calendulaceum*, are much more resilient and they continue to open new flowers over a period of several weeks. They seemed unfazed by those storms and looked beautiful.

On Wednesday (6/12), we drove south on the Blue Ridge Parkway to admire the views and also see the "Red Max", a rare, red flowered form of *R. maximum* that grows in a remote location near Mount Mitchell. They discovered that plant when they were building the Parkway in 1939. It was not in bloom yet but the red pigmentation of its sap was easily seen in the expanding foliage.

### Native Trips, continued

Next we stopped at Linville Falls which was in grand form due to all of that rain. The water level was high but no longer at flood stage. The hiking trails were open but we did notice piles of debris left by Sunday's flood. I tried to imagine the drama of the falls and what a torrent that river must have been during the flood. Even though some trees had been uprooted by the rushing waters, occasional plants of a fragrant white native azalea, *R. arborescens*, at the river's edge had survived the flood and a few had open blossoms!

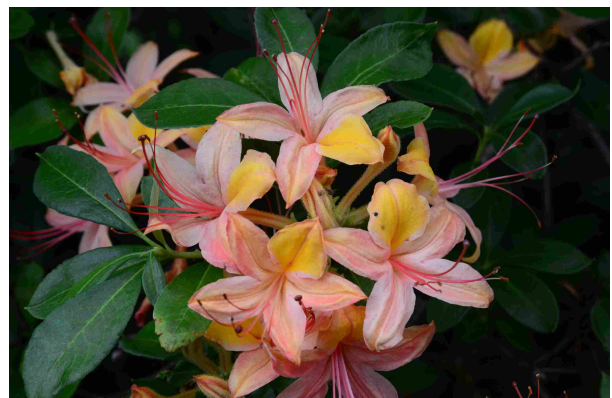
Later that afternoon, we visited with J. Jackson and Lindy Johnson in nearby Trade, TN. They have a gorgeous garden and many late blooming native azaleas, primarily complex hybrids of *R. cumberlandense* and *R. arborescens*. That is essentially the same parentage as the native azaleas in the hybrid swarm on top of Gregory Bald. The flowers come in a broad array of colors and many are delightfully fragrant. One big advantage of J. and Lindy's garden is they live about 10 minutes from our hotel and we don't have to endure a grueling 4-hour hike each way to the mountaintop to appreciate the blossoms.

On Thursday (6/13), as we were heading for Robbinsville to attend their Azalea Festival, we took a side trip to Wayah Bald near Franklin, NC. That mountain was a popular site due its easy access and extensive populations of *R. arborescens*, *R. calendulaceum*, *R. maximum* and mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*). A well-maintained gravel road leads to the top and they have restroom facilities and a fire tower up there, too.

Sadly, Wayah suffered serious damage by wildfires in November 2016. The fire tower was



'Big Bird' at Jane Gap on Roan



Pastel native in Jackson and Johnson garden

damaged and restrooms destroyed but those have now been rebuilt. Most of the trees and rhododendrons on the mountaintop were killed but many of the native azaleas and mountain laurel plants seem to be regenerating from the base. It will take many years for plants to recover but it does have some impressive views now.

Rick Bauer's article discusses the festivities at Robbinsville's Second Annual Azalea Festival. We were so fortunate that the weather continued to be clear and cool. Naturally, we went to Hooper Bald to see the large flowered forms of *R. calendulaceum* and assist with the guided tours and answer questions. The azaleas were in peak bloom up there, too.

Finally our stretch of perfect weather seemed to be coming to an end. Heavy storms were predicted for every day that next week and it is not wise to be on a mountaintop during a thunderstorm. Most of us decided to skip Gregory Bald this year and head for home on Sunday (6/16). After all, we had already seen J. and Lindy's garden so we didn't really need to hike up to Gregory Bald. Of course, there is always next year. Maybe you will join us!

## Norma Merritt

A Celebration of Life Lived will be held on July 10 at Fort Meyer, VA

A luncheon reception will take place from 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM at **Ft. Myer's Patton Hall**, with a sparkling toast at 1:30 PM.

In the **Ft. Myer Chapel** at 3 PM, a funeral service will be held followed by burial in Arlington National Cemetery.

All guests should enter Ft. Myer through the **Hatfield Gate** on **Washington Boulevard**. A current government issued photo ID is required for all visitors ages 13 and over

**Catherine M. Merritt-Hauer**

[hauerfamily@comcast.net](mailto:hauerfamily@comcast.net)

**Phil Louer** is not able to take care of their azalea collection and would like to give them away to anyone who cares to dig them up.

Phil's contact information: 703.754-2824 [plouer@msn.com](mailto:plouer@msn.com) <<mailto:plouer@msn.com>>

## *Spring plant sales*

Treasurer **Paul Beck** reports that this has been a good year for sales, totaling \$3,049. Top contributor was the Robbinsville, NC Native Plant Sale, followed by the special Bonsai Club sale, then Ayr Hill, Green Spring, and the ARS Convention in Pennsylvania.



## [Directions to Kirkwood Presbyterian Church](#)

8336 Carrleigh Parkway, Springfield, VA 22152, 703-451-5320 [Kirkwood.office@verizon.net](mailto:Kirkwood.office@verizon.net)

**From the East:** Rte 95 exit 169B, Franconia Rd West, which becomes Old Keene Mill Rd (Rte 644) about 3 miles, passing Irving Middle School, to a Right at a light on Carrleigh Parkway  
Make a U-turn at Dabney Avenue

**From the West:** Fairfax County Parkway (Rte 286)

East on Old Keene Mill Rd (Rte 644) about 3.5 miles, passing Rolling Road  
to Left at a light on Carrleigh Parkway ; Make a U-turn at Dabney Avenue

## *Taking Cuttings*

Select cuttings from **new growth found at the terminal branch ends** (avoid branches that have produced "sport" blossoms uncharacteristic of the named variety). Collect cuttings **after the stems are fully mature**, but before they turn woody. The parent plants must be in good health. A good time to take the cuttings is in the **early morning**. If drought conditions are present, **water the plants well the evening before**. Select stems of medium diameter rather than thin weak wood. Place cuttings (4 to 6) from each plant in a separate plastic bag (identified by the parent variety) along with a few drops of water, and seal it to retain 100% humidity inside. Print the name of the plant variety on the outside of the bag, along with a short description of the plant. **Avoid overheating of cuttings from direct sunlight**. Cuttings should be stuck in the rooting medium as soon as possible after taking the cuttings, but they can be stored in a closed container in the refrigerator for up to a week. {At the meeting ask our experts about growing cuttings!}

A good **label** with the plant name, hybridizer, flower description and "cutter" would help a lot!

Find your editor's Essay Blog at

<http://thegardenedge.blogspot.com>

A new one posted about the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

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## *Schedule*

7/14 Cutting Exchange Kirkwood Pres. Church

September 28 Fall Sale and Auction, Kirkwood

October 27 1 pm – 4:30 pm Fall Meeting with  
speaker; Kirkwood

December 8 Holiday Social



