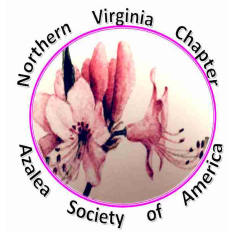


The Azalea Clipper

Volume 39 Issue 1 March 2018

Published 1980-2010 by Frances and Phil Louer

Northern Virginia Chapter Azalea Society of America



NEXT CHAPTER MEETING:

**SUNDAY MARCH 18
1:00 - 4:30**

**BARBARA
BULLOCK**

Decades With the Glenn Dales

Kirkwood Presbyterian Church

Plant Exchange too!
Any type!

Please label and sign your name

Refreshments: L - Z

Directions on back page

Horticulturist **Barbara L. Bullock** will be speaking about her work as curator of the extensive azalea and rhododendron collections at the **National Arboretum**. She has been working with the plants, hybridized by **Ben Morrison**, since 1993, has participated in the **Glenn Dale Preservation Project**, and has learned some intriguing things about rejuvenating the ancient plants.

Come hear her fascinating stories at the Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, March 18 at 1 PM.

A special thanks to President **Barb Kirkwood** for creating the new chapter logo in the upper right, with input from Don Hyatt and your editor!

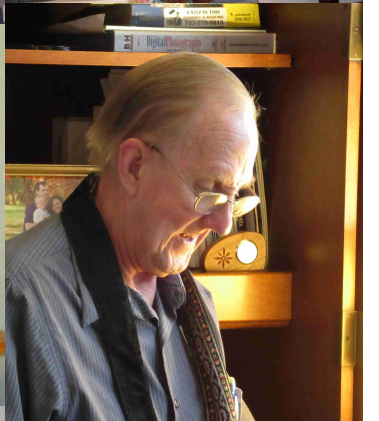
Check Inside!

p. 3 **President's Message**

p. 4 **California Rose Does Winter**

p. 5 **An Introduction to Heucheras**

p. 7 **Lars Larson reviews a book on Garden Insects**



President's Message

The chaos of the holidays is now behind us. Though we have quite a few cold days in front of us, it is not too early to begin thinking about spring, our Azaleas, and our first meeting of the year on March 18. **Barbara Bullock**, Curator of Azaleas & Rhododendrons at the National Arboretum, will be speaking about the **Glenn Dale** azaleas. She was featured in two of our recent **Azaleans** and her story and information are fascinating. If you haven't heard her speak, you are in for a treat.

Several in our group will then venture to Little Rock for the national convention in early April. Then we will be in the midst of our bloom season. Be sure to check out the schedule for garden tours and sales where you can help.

If you have any **Huang Azaleas** in your yard, would you please contact me. There is an effort by another group to put English names on some of them and the process requires some digital photos. I know several of you have Huang Azaleas but I have not heard from any of you.

We had a wonderful turnout for our Holiday Gathering. Thanks again to **Lars** and **Jean Larson** for sharing their lovely home with us. My only regret is that our gathering was in December and it was not conducive to touring Lars' garden. We are a group of exceptional cooks and had more food than we could possibly have eaten. We had plenty of time to socialize and then got down to the chapter

business. We had a very fruitful year with our sales and had to determine how best to share our bounty. We are moving forward with the **Klimavicz** legacy garden at **Meadowlark** as well as making donations to the **Friends of the National Arboretum, Green Spring Gardens Title 1 program, Norfolk Botanical Garden,** and the **Azalea Society of America**. Not only do we get to enjoy beautiful flowers and wonderful people, we get to help other groups.

We are now in desperate need of some more members to house our plants as we grow them up to sale size. One of our current members will be moving soon and that yard will no longer be available to us. If you have a shady spot in your yard where we could keep some pots, please give me (703-268-6958 kirkwoodb@aol.com) or **Carolyn Beck** a call, or send a message. It is amazing how many pots we can keep in a fairly small area and this is a really easy way to get involved and help out. If you are wondering if I mean you, the answer is YES!

See you in a few weeks at our meeting at 1 PM at **Kirkwood Presbyterian** in Springfield. Bring a friend. If you have any **excess plants**, indoor or outdoors, please bring them for a plant exchange. **Snacks** should be brought by members with last names beginning with **L-Z**.

Barb

Saturday June 30 the **Ben Morrison Chapter of ASA** will have a plant auction, cutting exchange, and picnic at **Carol Segree's** home. Details from: **Budne** at budne@aol.com

Captions: photos by Sperling (S), Newlan (N) – p. 1 Bullock (S), p.2 Joanne & Susan (N), Budne (S), Caitlin & Frederik (S), Carolyn & Robert (N), Joe (N), Mike & Ronnie (N), Rick & Helen (N), John (N), Fred (S), Diane & Joe (N), Joe & Leslie (N), Carol, Gray & Barbara (Don Hyatt), p. 4 Lars & Dan (N), Paul and Barb (S), Barry & Larry (N), Richard, Jim, David & Ralph (N), Dave, Paul & Budne (S); Heucheras (S)

{{ **California Rose** appeared behind me at a local nursery last fall, told me not to turn around, and quoted something about winter. As nearly as I can recall, she said: }}

California Rose Does Winter

I came from Southern California. I could see that we had snow in the high mountains for a couple of months in the winter quarter but we didn't actually get the powdery stuff in my neighborhood. However, one really unusual year we had two inches of snow and the city came to a standstill. There was no machinery to clear snow or salt to keep the cars from sliding on the ice. The neighborhood kids gathered all the snow on their lawns to create tiny little snow men. No one had snow boots or mittens. People in places like Detroit, Chicago and New York made snide comments about the California wimps.

So preparing for winter in California was a bit different from the regime here. Winter prep in California: Put on sweater not swim suit.

Generally, the temperatures would dip into the 50s, rarely the high 40s, but the only thing

falling from our skies were a few messy palm dates. There were a few deciduous trees that lost their leaves, but there was no fall color. The leaves turned brown and fell down dead. We did have giant Bougainvillea that shed their flowers and we could pretend they were pink, red, and orange snowflakes.

I was startled to learn that people living here and in the northern climes actually had summer and winter wardrobes and shoes with silly rules about the proper season to wear white. And there was a real necessity for light and heavy weight jackets, mittens, and boots.

I was delighted to live in a place with lots of trees but with trees come tons of leaves that necessitate raking and bagging. Not only our trees shed, but the neighbor trees looked around for the California suckers and headed straight to our yard. In the cartoons, you see children gleefully playing in the leaves in autumn. Gleeful was not my state of mind after the third raking. Our trees were naked but the leaves kept coming.

(Continued on p. 7)



Companion Plants: *Heucheras*
by Barry Sperling

You don't see companion plants at first. The trees and bushes are noticed when you turn a corner or look over your shoulder. It's when you walk to the edge of a bed that you point and say "Hey, look at that!"

Your first thought when "companion plants" are mentioned is Hosta. Your second thought: Ferns. If there is a third thought, let me suggest it be: Heucheras. Heucheras can scurry around between their larger neighbors, filling in gaps with different colors and forms. It must be considered a foliage plant as its flowers are so inconspicuous that you have to be a true heuchera fanatic to care.



'Kassandra'

The above are companion plants for azaleas and rhododendrons because they enjoy the same acid soil/dappled shade conditions and are unlikely to damage the dominant plants when sharing a bed. I would keep them outside the dripline of each azalea, but if they snuggle closer then a problem is unlikely.

I'll mention some I grow and let you chase down their pictures on the net as there is limited space here for their formal portraits. They don't all love my garden conditions and

some struggle, smiling weakly like fat guys shuffling through a marathon, saying they're fine



'Citronelle'

when they're not.

While heucheras grow worldwide, the US has two distinct regions which support different types. In the southeast, acidic clay-loam soils easily support the native *Villosa* type. The rockier alkaline soils of the west are home to smaller leaved plants. I've only managed to kill a few heucheras in my Northern Virginia garden, but they've all been among the small leaved, less aggressive varieties. They had put on a brave face for a short time but couldn't fake it forever.

Growing well and outlining borders is the light green 'Citronelle' and the darker, tan-purple-green 'Caramel'. 'Citronelle' provides a bright contrast to the darker green surroundings of azaleas, trees and grass. 'Caramel' comes up a light tan in the spring with a purple underleaf which, like Marilyn Monroe's legs, displays in a wind gust. 'Caramel' turns greenish as the summer kicks into its hot gear.

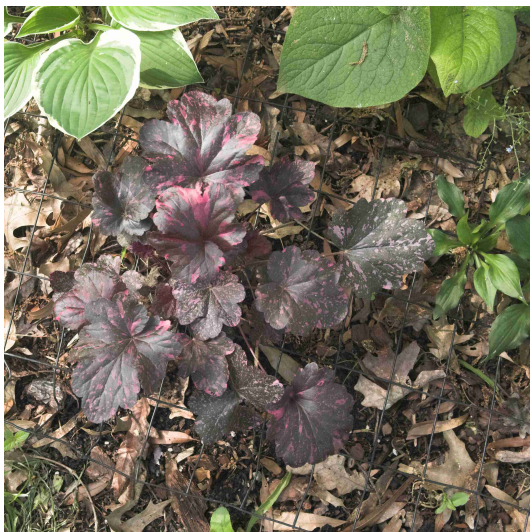
(continued on p. 6)

Did you know that **ALL** of the **Azaleans** and many of the **Clippers** are available online at our website:
<http://www.nv-asa.org?>

'Obsidian' covers the other end of the dynamic range of light, a purple so dark it often looks black. A lighter purple is 'Palace Purple', a strong grower needing to be planted with space to stretch before elbowing into its neighbors. New to me is 'Dark Secret', a very dark purple with strongly ruffled edges. It might turn into a focal point in its bed. 'Southern Comfort' is a large leafed plant that seems really happy to be here, emerging reddish in the spring, changing to green with hints of tan.

New to my garden last year was 'Midnight Rose' which had an unusual leaf. One of those plants that needs to be looked at closely: the dark purple leaf is streaked everywhere with light purple veining. An unusual combination. 'Tiramisu' was also new, coming up a bright tan and later turning green. Both of these plants were growing strongly by the end of the year.

'Midnight Rose'



Struggling ones I believe would be happier out west: 'Silver Scrolls' and 'Snow Angel', though if I had a sunnier location for them and a more neutral soil they might consent to thrive. Several very reddish heucheras have gone on to plant heaven, also known as the compost pile. 'Georgia Peach' comes to mind. Maybe it also needed more sun.

Related to heucheras are Tiarellas. Advertised as "Foam Flowers", the floral display briefly looks good, but their foliage is inferior to that of heucheras. 'Running Tapestry' does

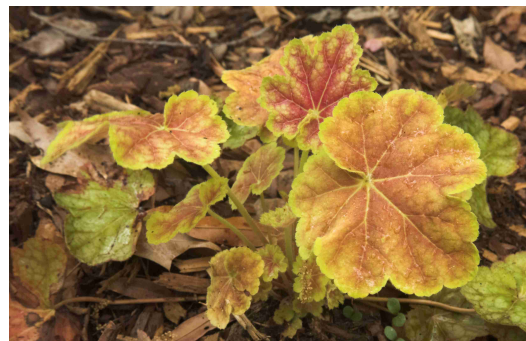
exactly that, running around the garden and invading other's space. I haven't torn it out but I might put it in prison.

Heucheras have been bred with Tiarellas to create Heucherellas, recently given the name "Foamy Bells." Unnecessarily confusing, but I don't sell plants. Maybe the confusion is commercial genius. Two that are doing well for me are 'Sweet Tea' and 'Alabama Sunrise'. 'Sweet Tea' has that familiar tan cast to its green base and 'Alabama Sunrise' is more greenish-yellow than anything else, but they both grow well.

I am looking forward to the emergence of 'Kassandra', which I planted late last year and now shows tan leaves with excessively ruffled reddish-purple edges. Sometimes "excessive" is just enough.

While you don't want a full bed of these uncommon plants, heucheras are great for contrast against the more pedestrian and dominant elements of your garden. Both for their coloring and leaf forms, they will draw you in for a closer look where you'll point and say "Hey, look at that!"

I bought and learned a lot from **'Heuchera, Tiarella and Heucherella, A gardener's guide'**, by Charles and Martha Oliver, B T Batsford Ltd., London, 2006



'Tiramisu'

*Garden Insects of North America:
the ultimate guide to backyard bugs*

A Review by **Lars Larson**

In a recent edition of the Washington Post, garden columnist Adrian Higgins mentioned the publishing of the 2d edition* of the above reference book. It got my attention as I am always finding new visitors to my garden that I am unfamiliar with, and never sure if it's a good or a bad one that may be ready to destroy my gardening efforts. With over 100,000 species of insects and arthropods in North America, a little help in sorting out the good, the bad, and the ugly is always welcome!

The edition has over 3,300 full-color photos within its hefty 704 pages! The organization of the book is particularly helpful as it is organized by where you are most likely to find the critters, with a chapter added on "Natural Enemies of Insects and Pollinators: The Beneficial Bugs." As one might expect, the same insect can be found in multiple chapters as it progresses through its growth stages and metamorphosis.

For the more scientifically inclined, the insects are listed by their common names and also their scientific names. There is an introduction into the life cycles of insects, terms of use and illustrations of the life stages to better understand at what point in the critter's life you may be observing. Another helpful section

describes and provides photos of "Excreted and Secreted Products Useful in Diagnosing Garden Arthropods and Slugs." If this isn't enough to get a bead on an interloper, there is another useful section on the "Common Types of Injuries Caused by Insects" as well as a listing of plant pathogens transmitted by insects and mites.

Included with multiple photos of each insect and the damage it causes, is a description of hosts, damage, distribution, appearance, life history and habits. Related insects causing similar damage is also included to provide a ready cross check on determining the actual perpetrators!

Warning: Looking at this book is a time killer! It's fascinating and I found I cannot look at just one insect. The reference photos are excellent and well document the insects, their descriptions and the ability to identify them. What you won't find are the remedies to eliminate the bad ones, but knowing what you have is the starting point!

*The authors are Whitney Cranshaw and David Shelter, who updated and expanded the first edition, published in 2004. I found it on Amazon.com for about \$25.

California Rose continues:

I convinced spouse that gathering them into a pile near the compost, capturing them with a tarp and smothering them would be sufficient and allow plenty of brown in the compost pile. Then some brilliant guy told me to run them over with the mower and it is actually good for the grass. Nuff said. That is definitely my future plan.

My first year here, I bought a snow shovel, actually two because I figure shoveling is an equal opportunity job. The guy in the hardware store asked me if I needed salt. I thought it was strange that Home Depot was selling salt which we normally buy in the blue carton in the grocery store. I declined but I understood the need for salt after the first snow, shovel, melt, and freeze turned my driveway into an ice rink. I slid down the driveway and off to Home Depot for the giant bag of salt.

(continued on p.8)

California Rose continues:

Plants are a whole other ballgame. We had things that died or died back from the heat, like our grass, but we just didn't have things that died back for winter. Pointsettia and Lantana just kept growing all through the year to giant status. Here I was dismayed as hostas disappeared, first fearing that snails and slugs had finally completely devoured them and then fearing that they would not make a spring appearance. Peonys took on a sick look as the stems flopped to the ground. At least my Azalea plants look fine, the ones that haven't been munched by the deer.

To you long-term, hardy Northern Virginia residents, you must think I am quite the California wimp. This past December, my travels took me to Pennsylvania, and Michigan with single digit temperatures and significant snow. I smiled when I overheard some locals talking about all those wimps in the Washington, DC area.

Directions to Kirkwood Presbyterian Church

8336 Carrleigh Parkway, Springfield, VA 22152, 703-451-5320 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

Schedule

3/18 Spring Meeting 1-5 Barbara Bullock,
Kirkwood Presbyterian Church

4/5 – 4/8 ASA Convention Little Rock, AR

4/22 Plant Sale Charlottesville, tentative

late April Cosby Garden Tour, tentative

4/28-29, 5/5-6 Tours of Member Gardens

5/19 Green Spring Gardens Sale

5/20 White's Nursery Open House 9 – 5,

22531 Wildcat Rd., Germantown, Md

5/20 – 5/27 ARS Convention Bremen, Germany

7/15 Cutting Exchange Kirkwood Pres. Church

9/15 Auction/Sale Kirkwood Pres. Church

10/20 Executive Committee Meeting

10/21 Fall Meeting Kirkwood Pres. Church

12/9 Holiday Social

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Find your editor's Essay Blog at

<http://thegardenedge.blogspot.com>

A new one posted about the 20th of each month.

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