



Tyler Arboretum - Proposed Hybridizers' Test Garden for the Mid-Atlantic Region

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Rhododendrons are beautiful additions to many gardens and landscapes. However, for the past few decades, eastern nurseries and garden centers have been offering the same rhododendrons year after year. During this time, there has been limited opportunity for eastern hybridizers to get their plants before the public. In addition, new hybrids have stayed in home gardens and sadly at times have perished with their creators.

The ARS chapters of District 8 hope to change that, and your financial support can make it a reality. We have an agreement with Tyler Arboretum, in the heart of Delaware County, PA, to establish a hybridizers test garden there. It will be a place to grow and evaluate hybrids developed and raised not only in our District, but in the entire mid-Atlantic region. This garden will be an opportunity to showcase new hybrids (some new hybrids under consideration are shown in the following images) and evaluate their hardiness, color, foliage and fragrance among other things. It will also renew interest in the well-established Wister-era plants in the Tyler collection. If you have questions or have a local hybrid to recommend, feel free to contact our committee: arstylegarden@gmail.com.



'John Paul II' (plant). Joe Minahan hybrid. Photo: Karel Bernady.



'John Paul II'. Joe Minahan hybrid. Photo: Karel Bernady.

We are reaching out to you to consider a donation to this new Test and Display Garden. We believe that through the establishment of this garden many benefits will accrue:

- It will encourage interest in hybrids that have been created over the past few decades for our Mid-Atlantic region,
- It will allow you identify choice new rhododendrons to seek out for your personal garden,
- You will participate in the development and promotion of the next generation of rhododendron hybrids,
- It will help the America Rhododendron Society to disseminate information about the genus *Rhododendron* to existing and new enthusiasts.
- The Test and Display Garden will allow you to have a hand in the development of new varieties that fit the wants and needs of landscape designs and residential home owners in the region.

The ARS Executive Committee has approved the concept and will allow us to operate under the Society’s 501c3 charitable tax status. Site preparation will cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000 —a one-time expense—and ongoing garden maintenance will cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000 annually, with all costs being shared equally by the garden’s Founding Task Force and Tyler Arboretum.

We know that ARS Chapters and individual members may have a number of different funding priorities, but we ask you to now consider a donation to this important project. Donations can be made via PayPal or by check. Checks should be made out to “The ARS” and must include “Tyler” in the memo section to ensure the Society places them in our account. Mail checks to:

The American Rhododendron Society
 Post Office Box 6414
 Williamsburg, Virginia 23188

If you wish to donate using PayPal, please this link:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=HCZCETNGASEY8

Some of the New Hybrids Under Consideration



‘Golden Mean’. Tom Ahern hybrid. Photo: Tom Ahern.



‘Madeline Winter’ (plant). Perc Moser hybrid. (*R. degronianum* subsp. *yakushmanum* ‘Exbury’ X *R. fortunei*). Photo: Karel Bernady.



‘Madeline Winter’. Perc Moser hybrid. (*R. degronianum* subsp. *yakushmanum* ‘Exbury’ X *R. fortunei*). Photo: Karel Bernady.



‘Sun Dust’. Alan & Shirley Anderson Hybrid Photo: Don Hyatt.



‘Angelina Dee’. John Doppel Hybrid Photo: Tom Ahern.



‘Reileyridge Low Boy’. Ed Reiley Hybrid. Photo: Mary Reiley.

Some New Hybrids Under Consideration (Continued)



'Lemon Zest'. Bud Gehrich Hybrid
Photo: Don Hyatt.



'White Elegance'. Werner Brack hybrid.
Photo: Karel Bernady.



'Bob's Peach'. Bob Bondira hybrid. Photo:
Karel Bernady.



'John C. White'. George Ring & Ray &
Jane Goodrich hybrid. Photo: Don Hyatt.



'Fashion Plate'. Joe Becales hybrid.
Photo: Ron Rabideau.



'Rhein's Picotee'. Bill Rhein hybrid.
Photo: Karel Bernady.



'Cause of Our Joy' (plant and flower). Joe Minahan hybrid. Photo: Karel Bernady.

About the Tyler Arboretum

Located in the heart of Delaware County, PA, Tyler Arboretum is 650 acres (263.5 ha) of natural beauty and history dating back to the time of William Penn, consisting of scenic woodlands, wetlands and meadows that provide an ideal place to exhibit rhododendrons planted by the renowned horticulturist Dr. John C. Wister, Tyler's Arboretum's first director. His own impressive mature rhododendron hybrids and a collection of Dexter rhododendrons are a highlight of the arboretum and are protected by a deer fence. Today, Tyler serves the Greater Philadelphia region through horticulture, education, and the preservation of natural lands.



Historic Structures at the Tyler Arboretum.



Paved paths among the rhododendrons.



Majestic Wister hybrids.



Deer fencing around the garden.

Acknowledgement

The authors express their great appreciation to Don Hyatt for his help in assembling this article and his contribution of photographs.

Tom Ahern has been a member of the Lehigh Valley Chapter since its inception in 1986 and started hybridizing in the early nineties.

Karel Bernady is a member of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter, a director of the chapter, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Research Foundation of the American Rhododendron Society.

Michael Martin Mills is a member of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter, secretary and editor of the chapter's newsletter RhodoGravure and North American Registrar of Plant Names.

Perc Moser is a member of the Valley Forge Chapter, a director of the chapter, Treasurer of the Research Foundation of the American Rhododendron Society and a hybridizer.