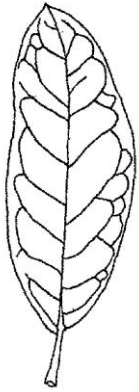


Catawba Rhododendron

Rhododendron catawbiense



GENERAL DESCRIPTION: This is the American rhododendron native to the southern Appalachian Mountains. It is also the most durable and easy to grow rhododendron for everyday gardening. In nature it grows at the edges of woodland and can be used in the shrub border, as a foundation planting or as a specimen or group planting. It can grow to 10 or more feet high, is evergreen and typically has s-6" inflorescences of lilac-purple flowers in May-June. There are many cultivars with an array of colors from white to red.

HABIT AND SIZE: 6-10' high and s-8' wide although it can grow to 20' high. A heavy evergreen shrub with large, dense foliage reaching to the ground. Generally a rounded outline but can become leggy in shady or unfavorable conditions.

LANDSCAPE VALUE: A strong, handsome plant with all season interest due to its' evergreen nature and large buds. When in flower a most voluptuous look! Can handle some shade.

LEAVES: Alternately arranged, simple, entire, evergreen, elliptic to oblong, 3-6" long and 1- 2" wide. The tip is obtuse and mucronulate (a short abrupt tip) and the base is rounded. The color is dark green on top and light green underneath. The overall texture is smooth and leathery. The distinct petiole is 0.5-1.25" long.

FLOWERS: s-6" diameter umbel-like racemes with lilac-purple 1.5" long and 2.5" broad flowers. The calyx is 5 parted and minute and the 5 parted corolla is broadly campanulate with 2 lips. There are 10 stamens that are long-exserted. The pistil has a long slender style with a capitate stigma (dense rounded cluster).

FRUIT: A dehiscent, 5 valved capsule.

BUD: Flower buds large (0.5" long) scaly, pointed and yellowish green. Very prominent.

DISEASES AND INSECTS: Very numerous and culture is sometimes problematic!.

HARDINESS AND RANGE: Zones 4-8.

CULTIVARS: Hundreds of cultivars.