

# Super Hardy Rhododendrons

**Flower bud and leaf hardy to -25F. All growing in sandy soil of pH 7.3**

Selected by Betty Ann Addison at Gardens of Rice Creek, Minneapolis, Minnesota 2026



# Large-leaf Super-Hardy Rhododendrons

Notable commercially available hybrids, leaf and flower bud hardy after test winter of 2024/2025

Large leaf rhododendrons bloom in late May.



# Besse Howells

Reddish-pink flowers, compact and low growing, sun tolerant. Hybridized by a landscaper



# Calsap

Striking Pineapple-shaped truss of white flowers with a purple eye



# Capistrano

Most hardy yellow, but needs winter shade to bloom after hard winters.



# Haaga

Best large leaf Rhododendron blooming on north side of house, benefiting from reflected light.



# Henry's Red

Hardest red rhododendron. Bred in New England, but is grown all over the U.S. & Canada



# John T. Meagher

White with a distinctive orange-red eye, from Canada. Makes an impressive, large shrub.



# Ken Janeck

Pink buds with large trusses of white flowers. Broad, dense growth



# Kullervo

Glistening white flowers with tomentose new growth. Dense grower. Hybridized in Finland.





# Mikkeli

Hardest of all commercial varieties. Pink-blushed flowers. Grows fast.

# Mikkeli

A great background or privacy shrub. This is a 20 year old plant growing in Scandia, Minnesota



# Mountain Marriage

Blooms in late June. A hybrid of American and Japanese parents. Dense attractive habit.



# Peter Tigerstedt

White flowers with red flare. Grows large. A Finnish hybrid



# Ruby Parasol

Flowers with a ruby-red eye. Velvety leaves on a dense, low growing plant.



# Sandra Hinton

Large growing, vigorous shrub. The hardiest rhododendron bred in Canada



# Trinity

Plentiful pure white flowers, compact grower. Useful for foundation planting.



# White Peter

White flowers with purple eye. Extra tolerant of sun and lime. Massive spreading growth.



# Small-leaf Super Hardy Rhododendrons

Commercial hybrids that were leaf and flower bud hardy after winter of 2024/2025

Small Leaf Rhododendrons need more sun than Large Leaf Rhododendrons and bloom early, starting in April/May. Combine with conifers for a year-round evergreen garden.



# Aglo

Bright pink flowers light up early spring landscapes. Low growing, compact plants.



# Alfreda Wyaczech

Pinkish lavender, grows low and broad. Will never cover a window. Useful in borders.



# Apple Blossom

Light pink mutation of PJM Compact. Just as hardy, but with more pleasing color.



# April Gem

Covered in creamy-white, double flowers, the compact plant makes a fine foundation shrub.



# April Rose

Fully double fuschia flowers cover every branch on this medium size, dense growing shrub



# Blizzard

Before trees leaf out in spring, this double flowered, white *R. dauricum* flowers profusely.



Bubblegum is the dwarf form of Olga Mezitt.  
Good for massing in sunny landscapes.



# R. Carolinianum 'Mehlquist White'

Pure white companion to pink rhododendrons. Low compact growth. More flowers in sun.



# Karen Selliger

Small-scale, neat shrub for rock gardens, front of border or boxwood substitute.



# Olga Mezitt

Best Small Leaf Rhododendron for dependable landscape shrub. Pinker, hardier than PJM



# PJM Compactum

Useful as a substantial foundation plant. A more contained, dense form of PJM



# Purple Gem

Early purple companion for spring bulbs. Neat, condensed form for small spaces.



# Gardens of Rice Creek Hybrids and Selections

Not available in the trade at present but these have commercial possibilities.

No damage to leaf or flower buds after test winter of 2024/2025



# April Dawn

Double Coral sport on April Rose. Amazing early color that draws viewers like a magnet. Blooms young.



# Blue Roses

Double blue/purple flowers. April Rose x augustinii



# Candelabra

Coral-tinted, sun tolerant hybrid of *Catawbiense* X *Smirnowii*. Dense, mid-size shrub.





# Chickadee Chick

Miniature shrub with  
double flowers for Rock  
Gardens and small  
landscapes. *R. dauricum*  
hybrid.

# Dancing Coral

Coral pink flowers on a broad spreading bush. *Catawbiense* x *smirnowii*



# Donna

Two toned pink flowers in tight ball trusses. Dwarf shrub for small spaces.



# Donna

Deep green, shiny leaves with clustered buds are attractive all year. Low growing.





# Eastern Bunny seedling selection

Glowing pink flowers in  
earliest spring.  
Deciduous, upright,  
narrow shrub. Blooms  
in sun or shade.

Hardest large pink  
*R. mucronatum*  
selection

# Green as Grass

Select R. brachycarpum from the mountains of Japan. Hardy parent—tight truss, low grower.



# Jack-in-the-Box

Like a flowering boxwood. Neat domed growth. Chosen by Proven Winners for distribution



# Kellie

Striking, long lasting, two-toned flowers, compact growing shrub. Cat x Smir?



# Misty Blush

Large, blush-pink flowers in tight trusses. Medium to large sized plant. R. brachy. X White Peter.



# Magenta Magic

Glowing rose flowers on a substantial shrub. An unusual color in hardy rhododendrons.

May be useful in hybridizing. Calsap x Vineland Fragrance



# Nearly Purple

Profuse bell-shaped flowers on a small, compact bush. *R. smirnowii* x Lees Dark Purple.



# Peace Dove

Huge white flowers with tangerine buds, spreading and low growing. Best in winter shade.

Dancing Coral selfed. May be polyploid.



# Pink Chiffon

Delightful, ruffled pink double flowers on a 5' shrub. Developed by Song Sparrow.



# Pink PJM

A pleasantly pink sport of PJM Compact. Just as tolerant of harsh conditions as the original. Under evaluation to be a Proven Winner.





# R.mucronulatum Pinky Dinky

Very early pink flowers  
on a deciduous  
compact shrub..

# R. Mucronulatum 'Early Bird'

Super early, super hardy. OP seedlings are hardy and sometimes produce “pansy” patterned flowers. Deciduous leaves. Blooms in sun or shade.



# Red Elf Evergreen Azalea

Hardest evergreen azalea known. Hybridized as a tribute to Charles Addison 1996



# Rhododendron poukhanense

Very hardy species from Korean mountains. Hybridizes with tender evergreen azaleas.



# Rice Creek

Sun tolerant hybrid of *R. brachy*. Green as Grass x Besse Howells with tight ball trusses.



# Rhododendron smirnowii 'Rice Creek'

Pink, scalloped flowers with heavily indumented leaves.

Compact grower, Reliably hardy parent for shapely plants.



# R. smirnowii x dichroanthum

Striking red/orange flowers, heavily indumented leaves. Useful in hybridizing for new color in hardy rhododendrons



# Star Trumpet

Unusual flower shape. Helsinki University selfed. Open growth.



# Tennis Ball

Ball shaped truss of white flowers with dark lines. Spreading growth is attractive year 'round.



# Violet Roses

Double purple flowers, vigorous plants. Seedling of April Rose x *augustinii*.



# Rhododendron yakushimanum “Rice Creek”

Seedling from Island of Yakushima, Japan. Growing since 1980 in Minnesota.  
Hardier than any commercial varieties of *R. yakushimanum*



# Growing Rhododendrons Successfully

## WELL DRAINED SOIL

- 1 A. Moist, well drained soil, dark with organic matter “like chocolate cake, not fudge”.
- B. Sandy soil is easily improved with peat moss, composted leaves or bark.
- C. On clay soils, plant in a raised bed or berm made with sand, peat, bark and topsoil.

## GOOD LIGHT, NOT BURNING SUN

- 2 A. Partial sun: morning sun, afternoon shade
- B. Dappled sunlight from a canopy of trees
- C. North side of buildings that gets reflected light from a lawn or street.

## STEADY MOISTURE and YEAR-ROUND MULCH

- 3A. Steady moisture, not too wet or too dry
- B. Blanket with an organic mulch year ‘round
- C. Fertilize in spring with 15-0-20. Occasional treatment with Manganese Sulphate

# Thank you for watching!

Rhododendrons are the “Queen of Shrubs”, adding beauty and structure year –round to gardens and landscapes. Strong, Minnesota-hardy plants are worth seeing year-round at Gardens of Rice Creek and the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

