

ARNOLD ARBORETUM

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

BULLETIN

OF

POPULAR INFORMATION

SERIES 3. VOL. V

MAY 20, 1931

NO. 6

Various Shrubs. With the distribution of this Bulletin special attention should be called to various shrubs now passing or still in good flowering condition. Our native Hobble-bush, *Viburnum alnifolium*, has been in blossom for two weeks and has been conspicuous with its white, bract-like, sterile flowers. This shy, northern, shade-loving, woodland shrub may be induced to grow under cultivation if given a cool and somewhat shaded location such as it has near the Birch group in the Arboretum. Near it, in the Viburnum group, the visitor will find the much and deservedly advertised *Viburnum Carlesii* in passing bloom with its clusters of pinkish white, fragrant flowers. *V. bitchiuense*, close by, has similar flowers but they are borne in more open cymes, the petals being wider spreading. The plant is less compact and less attractive than *V. Carlesii*. The flowers of these two Viburnums, especially those of *V. Carlesii*, suggest *Daphne Cneorum* by their delightful odor and appearance, except that the flowers of the Daphne are of a deeper color. A fine group of this pretty, evergreen, little shrub is in full inflorescence along the roadside near the Hickory and Chestnut group, between the Centre Street gate and Hemlock Hill. Farther along this same road may be seen the purple bloom of *Rhododendron canadense*, more familiarly known as Rhodora. In the same family, Ericaceae, belongs an interesting little Heather, *Erica darleyensis*, with rosy-red flowers and dark red anthers. It is passing but has been flowering for several weeks past and, indeed, some blooms may be found in sheltered places almost every month in the winter. It is said to be of hybrid origin between the common *Erica carnea* and *E. mediterranea* and is reported to be as hardy as the first named parent. A good patch of it is to be seen on Bussey Hill. There, also, the beautiful pink-flowered *Rhododendron Schlippenbachii* is dropping its flowers. This native of Korea and Japan is nearly matched, in a horticultural sense, by the now well-known, and deservedly popular *R. Vaseyi*. Although resembling each other, these two species are placed in different sectional groups of the genus *Rhododendron* by systematic botanists. *R. Vaseyi* has somewhat smaller flowers varying in color from deep rosy-pink to pale pink or white, a varietal name, *R. Vaseyi album*, having been given to the latter. Seed-

lings vary considerably so that it is well to grow a number and select the best. if it is not practicable to propagate a specially desirable form by division. The variability shown in this species offers a good illustration of the possibilities of obtaining improved forms by simple selection of seedlings without artificial interference by the hand of man.

The genus *Rhododendron* is divided or subdivided into various groups according to the views of different botanists. In the Arboretum under the name *Rhododendron* are included groups which some authors would classify under *Azalea*, *Rhodora*, and other genera. These segregations under separate generic headings may appear simple and satisfactory when considering local species or those of a special region, like Eastern North America. But when all the species of Asia are considered, the separating features which were satisfactory for a local flora become tangled with connecting links so that it may become difficult to divide the whole group into separate genera that are distinct. This broad grouping into one generic botanical heading under *Rhododendron*, the oldest Linnean botanical name, would seem all the more justifiable when we consider that Rhododendrons have been crossed with Azaleas, and Azaleas with Rhodora. As classified in the popular mind, the true Rhododendrons are evergreen shrubs or small trees bearing terminal clusters of showy flowers. They can never become universally popular or so widely distributed as Lilacs, for example, because of greater difficulty of propagation, expense, slow growth, and particularly on account of requiring so-called acid soils of a certain character found only in a relatively small part of our whole country.

The best flowering of evergreen, broad-leaved Rhododendrons usually occurs in the latter part of May or early June. There are few really hardy species adapted to this climate, but hybridization has produced a great many named kinds that are more or less amenable to our conditions. On May 8th, a plant known as *Rhododendron venustum* was in full bloom in the Rhododendron collection at the foot of Hemlock Hill. A broad-spreading but low plant 3 or 4 feet high, it was covered with large trusses of deep pink or rose-colored flowers and was very conspicuous among its neighbors which are not yet in blossom. It has been growing in the Arboretum, and has proved hardy, for more than twenty years. It is rather interesting that this plant should be so hardy here for it is a hybrid between *Rhododendron caucasicum* and the Himalayan *R. arboreum*, neither of which is really satisfactory in our climate, although they may live and produce flowers, and occasionally do very well. *R. caucasicum*, with yellowish-white to pink flowers, is the hardier, while *R. arboreum* is too tender for cultivation in our northern climate. *R. venustum* originated in England over 40 years ago. It appears to be rarely listed or grown in this country, but it is frequently advertised in English and other European catalogues, commonly under the name *R. Jacksoni*, which is a synonym of *R. venustum*. Growing beside this plant in the Arboretum is another in blossom but with white or faintly pinkish white flowers. It was imported from Germany in 1908 under the name of *Rhododendron* "Diana" and is apparently of the same hybrid origin as *R. venustum*, but much less satisfactory because the plant seems weaker and the flower buds



RHODODENDRON YEDOENSE POUKHANENSE

Raised in the Arnold Arboretum from seed collected on Poukhan, Korea,
in 1905 by J. G. Jack (*Drawing by Blanche Ames Ames*)



Jack, John G. 1931. "Various Shrubs." *Bulletin of popular information - Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University* 5(6), 21–24. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.250082>.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/217003>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.250082>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/250082>

Holding Institution

Harvard University Botany Libraries

Sponsored by

BHL-SIL-FEDLINK

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.