



Hybrid Rhododendrons in the Arboretum



lection are recorded but one only is indicated as being worth growing! The one so honored is *Album elegans*. This is, of course, a British viewpoint but absolutely unbiased and indicates clearly how much below their standard are the hybrid *Rhododendrons* cultivated here. It is probable that a few of the toughest sorts give better returns here than in the British Isles but when every allowance possible is made the result is disappointing. To argue that no varieties suitable for this climate have been produced since 1885 is foolish; there may not have been many but some there must be and it is greatly to be regretted that they are not represented in gardens here. In *Album elegans* with pale mauve fading to white blossoms, the very similar *Album grandiflorum* and the white flowered *Catawbiense album* we have three excellent varieties of their class. Of the reds passing to crimson Charles Dickens, James Macintosh, Kettledrum, S. B. Parsons, *Atrosanguineum* and H. W. Sargent are good but it must be confessed that the rest have dull, unattractive colored blossoms. We have really no good pinks among these hybrids and the purples are one and all muddy. Lady Armstrong, Ignatius Sargent, F. L. Ames and Daisy are passing fair but what is needed are varieties with purer and better colors and especially more fiery scarlets of the type of Prometheus, alas! scarcely hardy in the Arboretum.

**Caucasicum Hybrids.** The product of intercrossing *R. caucasicum* with certain *Catawbiense* Hybrids and other species form a small but extremely useful group. They possess no wide range of color, all having blossoms white or nearly so, but they are very hardy and free flowering. They are said to root from cuttings and, moreover, to be slightly tolerant of limestone. The typical species, whose flowers appear to vary in color from white through pale straw-yellow to pink, is probably not in cultivation in this country. Perhaps the nearest approach to it is *Coriaceum*, which has flowers pale pink in the opening bud and milky white when fully open. Two of the best of this group are Mont Blanc and Glenneum, both pinkish in the bud and pure white when the blossoms are fully opened. Another excellent sort is Boule de Neige which has pure white blossoms.

**Fortunei Hybrids.** In recent years a great many varieties of this origin have been originated in the British Isles, where, indeed, they have out-classed in beauty of blossom and popularity the older *Catawbiense* Hybrids. Of this group only one has so far proved perfectly at home in the Arboretum; this is Duke of York which was received from Mr. G. Paul of Cheshunt, England, in 1915. This has soft pink, 5- to 7-lobed blossoms, each about 3 inches broad, borne ten or twelve together in a loose cluster. It is growing in a well protected spot and so far has not suffered unduly from winter cold. At Sandwich, Massachusetts, Mr. Charles O. Dexter, experimenting with this group and *R. decorum*, another Chinese species, has succeeded in growing and blossoming a number of very lovely forms. Given adequate protection it seems probable that many of these hybrids would prove as amenable as the *Catawbiense* Hybrids.

E. H. W.



# ARNOLD ARBORETUM

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

## BULLETIN

OF

## POPULAR INFORMATION

---

SERIES 3. VOL. IV

JUNE 7, 1930

NO. 9

---

The Arboretum is still gay with blossom. The hybrid Rhododendrons at the foot of Hemlock Hill are in their prime; Azaleas of several sorts make fine splashes of color here and there, especially through the Oak collection where *Rhododendron calendulaceum*, the Flame Azalea, in yellow, orange and scarlet, is particularly arresting. Viburnums are in full bloom and so, too, are many other shrubs. In the Pinetum the bright greens of the young growth on Hemlock, Spruce and Fir are in marked contrast with the dark black-green foliage of last season, and the Yews with their brownish green young foliage are particularly lovely; it is trite to say that narrow-leaved evergreens are lovely at all seasons but it is now in their young growth that they display their maximum beauty.

**Cornus controversa.** This Cornel is one of the loveliest of all flowering trees that can be grown in the climate of New England. On Peters Hill there are two or three fine specimens now in full bloom. The largest of these was raised from seeds collected in central China by E. H. Wilson in 1907 and is 20 feet tall with a trunk about 1 foot in diameter, the branches spreading fully 50 feet. The branches are whorled but in this particular tree they are more crowded than is usual, the normal habit of branching being tier above tier. The leaves are slender petioled, prominently veined, lustrous green on the upper and glaucous on the lower surface. The flowers, small, white with prominent erect, pale yellow-anthered stamens, are borne in erect, flattened-round corymbs, each from 3 to 5 inches in diameter. The inflorescences terminate every shoot and the whole tree is a mass of white, tier above tier and conspicuous from afar. The fruit, globose, the size of a garden pea, is blue-black. To get the full effect of beauty of this tree it should be planted where it can be looked upon from above when its full wealth of blossom is apparent. This Cornel is widespread in northeastern Asia, extending from the Chino-Thibetan borderland eastward on the mountains of China and southern Korea



Wilson, Ernest Henry. 1930. "Cornus controversa." *Bulletin of popular information - Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University* 4(9), 33–35.

<https://doi.org/10.5962/p.322171>.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/216950>

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.322171>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/322171>

#### **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>.