

RHODODENDRON

Rhododendron Catawbiense 'Roseum Elegans'



Family:	Ericaceae
Native to:	Asia
Hardiness Zones:	4 to 8
Bloom Time:	May to June
Height:	6 to 8 feet
Spread:	6 to 8 feet
Leaf:	Glossy, dark green
Bloom:	Lavender pink

DECIDUOUS EVERGREEN SHRUB

Culture:

Best grown in acidic, organically rich, evenly moist, moisture-retentive, but well-drained soils in part shade. Commonly called mountain rosebay, it is a large, rounded to spreading, multi-stemmed shrub that has elliptic to oblong, glossy, dark green leaves 3-6" long. Flowers bloom in compact showy bell-shaped terminal clusters (trusses), each containing 15-20 flowers. Flowers are followed by elongated dry seed capsules (each to 1/2 to 1" long) which mature in fall. Gray-brown bark develops fine scales with age.

Did You Know?

In the language of flowers, Rhododendron symbolizes danger /beware.

The rhododendron is the national flower of West Virginia, the state of Washington, and Nepal, where the flower is considered edible and enjoyed for its sour taste. The pickled flower can last for months and the flower juice is also marketed. The flower, fresh or dried, is added to fish curry in the belief that it will soften the bones. The juice of the rhododendron flower is used to make a squash.

Rhododendrons have been referenced by Ralph Waldo Emerson in his poem titled "*The Rhodora, On Being Asked, Whence Is the Flower*".

In *Ulysses* by James Joyce, the rhododendrons play an important role in Leopold and Molly's early courtship.

Throughout the novel, *Rebecca*, by Daphne Du Maurier, the character of Rebecca is associated with "blood red" rhododendrons, perhaps due to the toxic roots of the plant mirroring the poisonous character of Rebecca.