



Azalea 'Formosa Southern Indica' *Rhododendron Azalea*

03-04



<u>Hardiness</u>	<u>Exposure</u>	<u>Soil</u>	<u>Water</u>	<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Height</u>
Zones 8, 9, 14-24,	Filtered sunlight	50% organic matter, 30% native soil, 20% sand	Regular to ample watering	Variety of pinks to reds	Up to 6 feet tall

Azaleas are grouped together as one species of the genus *Rhododendron*, and are therefore members of the Heath Family (*Ericaceae*). This could cause some confusion because of the related plants referred to by the common name of rhododendron. This publication refers only to those plants which are true azaleas. Botanically, azaleas are separated from rhododendron based upon floral structure. Azaleas have 5 to 7 stamens per flower, while rhododendrons have 7 to 10 stamens per flower. Currently, there are between 70 and 80 species of azaleas and several thousand cultivars. Our modern day azaleas which nurserymen grow and sell can be a species or a hybrid. Species are grown from the native environment or possibly grown from seed collected from a particular cultivated plant. Hybrids are developed through a controlled breeding process and are propagated asexually and distributed as a specific variety -- or more correctly -- a cultivar. Thus, the Pinxterbloom Azalea or Wild Honeysuckle (*R. nudiflorum*) is a species while 'George L. Taber' is a hybrid. Species will come true to type from seed while hybrids will not. There is obviously a great deal of confusion with classifying azaleas. The following is a simplified, short breakdown of the more popular groups being grown in N.C.

All parts are poisonous