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## Twelve Months of Flowering Rhododendrons

Many in the Northwest have rhododendrons in bloom in April and May. One big splash of color is great, but what if your garden were to show some color for all 12 months? With some planning, some plant hunting and a little extra money you can have the joy of these wonderful flowers all year long.

**January** is the month for the earliest bloomers. [A very cold winter will delay bloom].

Abigale - pink, tall	Nobleanum Coccineum - red, tall
Harry Carter - pink, tall	Nobleanum Venustum - rose pink, tall
Lee's Scarlet - red, medium	R. dauricum - rosy purple or white, medium
Nobleanum Album - white, tall	R. mucronulatum - bright rosy pink, medium

**February** brings a little warmth or a little more snow. But these rhododendrons will bloom through it all. (In colder years or locales, some of these will bloom in March).

Babylon - white/chocolate, tall	Promise of Spring - rose, tall
Bodega Crystal Pink - pink, medium	Red Majesty - red, tall
Bo-peep - lemon yellow, medium	Quaver - yellow, low
Bric-a-Brac - pink/white, low	Seta - light/deep pink, tall
Christmas Cheer - pink, medium	Sausalito - pink/red, tall
Conemaugh - lavender pink, tall	Tessa (& Tessa Bianca) - pink (white), medium
Etta Burroughs - bright red, tall	Vemus - pale pink, tall
Goosander - light yellow, low	Wisp - pink, medium
Helen Scott Richey - pink, low	R. barbatum - red, medium
Olive - orchid pink, medium	R. irroratum - cream or pink/spotted, tall
Peter Faulk - red, medium	R. lanigerum - rosy purple, medium
Pink Prelude - pink, tall	R. moupinense - white / pink, low
Pink Snowflakes - pink/white, low	R. pemakoense - pink, low
Pioneer - bright pink, medium	R. praevernum - white/rose, tall
Praecox - rosy lilac, medium	R. strigillosum - blood red, tall

**March** brings us the first hints of spring. These plants get a jump on the crowd of rhododendrons in the next 2 months. This is but a sample of the many dozens of March-blooming varieties.

Cilpinense - white / pink, low	R. calophytum - white with pink blotch, tall
Elya - rose, medium	R. ciliatum - white/pink, medium
Ginny Gee - pink, low	R. hodgsonii - rosy-purple, tall
Lucy Lou - white, low	R. leucaspis - white/pink, low
P.J.M. - lavender-pink, medium	R. oreodoxa - soft pink, tall
Rosamund! - light pink, medium	R. racemosum - pink, medium
Shamrock - yellow-green, low	R. recurvoides - white/rose, low
Small Gem - white/pink, low	R. rubiginosum - rose, tall
Small Wonder - red, low	R. russatum - purple, medium
Snow Lady - white, low	R. schlippenbachii - pink azalea, medium
Unknown Warrior - red, tall	R. sutchuenense - lilac or rose, tall
	R. principis (vellereum) - white or rose, tall

**April** brings hundreds more rhododendrons to bloom. Yellows and purples predominate but whites, pinks and some reds can be found. A visit to your local nursery is in order. The Species Study Group of the Seattle Rhododendron Society has a show in late March or early April. There you will find many of these wonderful plants to view and to buy.

**May** is the peak of the blooming season with hundreds of varieties in bloom. Find a chapter of The American Rhododendron Society in near you which may have an annual show during this month. This is the best place to view the common and the most unusual rhododendrons. View the show with care making notes of your favorites. Remember you don't have the room to plant them all. Then visit the chapter's plant sale where members will help you find the ones you just have to have!

**June** is the start of summer, but in Puget Sound it's often cool & wet! Most of the June bloomers need light shade to be at their best.

Autumn Gold - salmon-apricot, tall	Trilby - red, tall
Betty Arrington - rosy pink, tall, fragrant	Whitney's Late Orange - orange, medium
Blanc-Mange - white, tall	R. bakeri - orange, salmon, yellow azalea, med
Daphnoides - purple, medium	R. brachycarpum - creamy white, medium
Edward Dunn - apricot-pink, tall	R. diaprepes - white/rose, tall, fragrant
Goldsworth Orange - salmon, tall	R. discolor - white or pink, tall, fragrant
Gomer Waterer - white/mauve pink, tall	R. ferrugineum - rose or pink, low
Kilimanjaro - red, tall	R. hemsleyanum - white, tall
Lemon Marmalade - yellow, medium	R. hirsutum - white or pink, low
Leo - red, tall	R. maximum - white to rose, tall
Lodauric - white / yellow, tall, fragrant	R. occidentale - white to pink/yellow azalea, tall
Purple Lace - purple, tall	R. ungemii - pinky white, medium

**July** may be the middle of summer but there are still some rhododendrons that will bloom protected by the shade of your trees. Some are the best hardy fragrant rhododendrons.

Aladdin - pink, tall, fragrant	R. auriculatum - white, tall, fragrant
Europa - rosy lilac, tall	R. bakeri 'Camps Red' - red azalea, medium
Good News - crimson, medium	R. diaprepes 'Gargantua' - white, tall, fragrant
Independence Day - red, tall	R. facetum - crimson-red, tall
Pearce's American Beauty - red, tall	R. maximum 'Mt Mitchell' - red, tall
Polar Bear - White, tall, fragrant	R. thayeranum - pink or white/pink, medium
Romany Chal - red, tall	R. viscosum - white or pink azalea, tall, fragrant

**August** is the time for most of us to go on vacation, lie around and sip iced tea. Most of the rhododendrons in your garden are growing and setting buds for next year. These few plants may be hard to find but well worth the effort. Try the Rhododendron Species Foundation for most of the species in this list, and many other early and late bloomers not included.

Midsummer - rosy pink, tall	R. prunifolium - red or orange azalea, medium
R. arborescens - white azalea, tall, fragrant	R. serotinum - white/rose, tall
R. nakaharae - brick red azalea, low	R. serrulatum - white azalea, tall

**September** and **October** and our weather begins to cool. Many rhododendrons have the habit of "second blooming" in these months. Stressful conditions may cause flowering in the Fall. This is a partial list. 'Elizabeth' is one of the best and most floriferous "second bloomers".

Bob's Blue - electric blue, medium	Yellowhammer - yellow, medium
Blue bird - blue, low-medium	R. impeditum - purple, low
Camubia - red, tall	R. fastigiatum - blue-purple, low
Elizabeth - red, low	R. prunifolium - red or orange azalea, medium
Ernie Dee - purple, low	R. yakushmanum hybrids (many)

During mild **November** and **December** months, especially for those who live near Puget Sound, several rhododendrons will bloom regularly every year. Most may only have a few flowers. These plants may bloom into the month of January depending on the weather. This makes every year just a little bit different than the last.

Lee's Scarlet - red, medium	Nobleanum Venustum - soft pink, tall
Nobleanum Coccineum - red, tall	R. dauricum - rose-purple, medium

NOTES: Flowering times may vary by three or more weeks depending on microclimate, planting location, locale and "unseasonable" temperatures.

Many rhododendrons have beautiful foliage and make outstanding garden plants year-round, in bloom or not.

Heights: Low = 2' or less; medium = 3-4'; tall = 5' or more, at 10 years age.

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