

## This Week in the Garden: “Did I Speak Too Soon?” - April 18, 2020

by Don Hyatt

So much for my April 4<sup>th</sup> hope for a benign spring. Mother Nature surprised many of us this week with a freeze. The 30° F in my garden was not bad compared to low twenties in some years. A few degrees of frost may damage open flowers but most buds should be OK.

I thought I would use this issue to introduce our youngest and also our most distant member, Dr. Ralf Bauer. Ralf is a dentist in Offenburg Germany who has become enamored by the rich flora of the Southern Appalachians. He has gone hiking with us to places like Roan Mountain and Gregory Bald, and made multiple trips in some years to see other azalea populations.

Ralf visited Charlie Andrews to see his Hurricane Creek hybrids in Georgia. He traveled many times to see Ron Miller and the native azaleas of Florida. He would be on the Escambia River with Ron right now if his travel plans were not canceled due to the virus epidemic.



*R. periclymenoides* ‘Paxton’s Blue’ R. Bauer



Vista of Offenburg from a Cherry Orchard R. Bauer



Ralf on the Trail at Roan Mountain in 2016 D. Hyatt



Pink *R. vaseyi* seedling



*R. vaseyi* ‘White Find’



R. Bauer



*R. luteum* ‘Golden Comet’



Sand Myrtle (*Kalmia buxifolia*) R. Bauer



Ralf has a small garden at his home in the city of Offenburg but it is getting full. He started planting native azaleas from European and US mail order sources. When he started hiking with us in 2015, he began returning home with small plants people had given him and items he purchased at the nurseries we visited during our tours.

Now Ralf is raising azaleas from our seed exchanges. He said he has a bumper crop of budded seedlings this year and will at least be home to see them. He admits he can’t keep them all but will select a few and give the rest to arboretums like the Bremen Rhododendron Park. That deep pink *R. vaseyi* was the first of many to bloom. Will it be a keeper?



Pieris 'Spring Snow' L. Scheinfeld



'Taurus' R. McWhorter

### Sharing Garden Favorites

Lois Scheinfeld, an Associate member from New York, sent an image of Pieris x 'Spring Snow'. It is a cross between *P. japonica* and our native *P. floribunda* that she has had for 20 years. It has the same upright flower clusters as the native species but is easier to grow. Check out Flora Gloria, the blog that Lois posts about gardening on Long Island. Her latest post has more about this Pieris but she has blogs going back to 2011.

[www.floragloria.com](http://www.floragloria.com)

Bob and Rosa McWhorter sent a picture of their 'Taurus' which is opening now. That red is a real show stopper! Don't those two make a great landscape pairing?



Hirado Hybrid 'Miyuno-no-Tsuki'

C. Beck



*Cercis* 'Don Egolf'

C. Beck

Carolyn and Paul Beck sent some images from their garden. The magnificent Hirado azalea 'Miyuno-no-Tsuki' is borderline hardy for us, but what a stunner with huge pink flowers and contrasting green and white blotch.

'Don Egolf' is a sterile selection of the Chinese redbud, *Cercis chinensis*, the counterpart of our native *Cercis canadensis*. It is similar in color to our species but grows more slowly, has better foliage, and blooms more heavily. Since it does not set seed, it looks tidy all year long.

'Olga Mezitt' is a small leaf lepidote rhododendron that really does well for us. Those bright pink ball trusses really make a statement in the early spring garden.



'Olga Mezitt'

C. Beck



'Windbeam Storm' (Yaku Fairy x Mary Fleming) D. Jolley



*Trillium grandiflorum* & *Phlox divaricata* D. Jolley

Doug Jolley sent more pictures from his West Virginia garden prior to the cold snap. Freezes are always worse in the mountains. His 'Windbeam Storm' is a seedling he got from Bill Storm 35 years ago. It is a great compact plant.

Notice the two photos from Richard Bradshaw's garden near Annapolis. No frost there. The bay tempers his climate.



Rhododendron 'Landmark' D. Jolley



Yellow and White Trout Lilies D. Jolley



*Trillium sessile* D.



Woodland Azaleas & Purple *Phlox stolonifera* R. Bradshaw



Richard's Pond Awakens R. Bradshaw

## Wildflowers and Ephemerals

Trees, rhododendrons, and azaleas form the primary structure of many gardens but to me, the wildflowers and companion plants really complete the design. It is the same finishing touch that jewelry gives to evening wear. A black dress can use a string of pearls.

An ephemeral groundcover I have had for 40 years is *Anemone nemorosa*. It is native to Europe and does well for me. Spreading by underground runners, it does not seem to compete but blooms in early spring and then goes dormant.

In Germany, Ralf Bauer says single whites are the most common in the wild but he did find a rare pink form. I grow two forms, a deep blue which I have under azaleas and lepidotes, and 'Vestal', a white with a tufted center. I first saw 'Vestal' years ago under yaks in the Cecil Smith garden. Perfection!



From Ralf Bauer's Garden: *Anemone nemorosa*, White Single Bauer



Ralf's Pink Form Bauer

Blue D. Hyatt

'Vestal' D. Hyatt



*Phlox divaricata* D. Hyatt



'Hank's Mellow Yellow' & *A. nemorosa*



*Anemone blanda* D. Hyatt

*Anemone blanda*, the Grecian Windflower, looks like *nemorosa* and bulbs are very easy find in the fall. They just don't thrive for me.

Of course, my favorite blue wildflower is *Phlox divaricata*. Every critter seems to like it, too.

A blue flower that nothing eats is *Ipheion uniflorum*. It is in the Amaryllis family like daffodils so most animals leave them alone.

I must share another elegant plant in Carol Segree's garden, *Jeffersonia dubia*. It is the Korean equivalent of our native Twinleaf but in pale blue. Lovely!



*Ipheion uniflorum* D. Hyatt



*Jeffersonia dubia* C. Segree

We hope your garden is in bloom.  
Send us images of favorite plants.

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