



RHS Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group Coronation Gift Collection to His Majesty King Charles III

The Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Coronation Collection is a collection of plants and trees gifted to His Majesty, to mark his Coronation. As our Royal Patron it represents our appreciation of how much his support and interest in our genera is valued by our members from around the world.

It tells the story of the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group's one hundred and seven-year history. The twenty-five plants and trees provide a historical and horticultural link between the genera and the Royal Family and represents the legacy of great gardens, the passion of private breeders and having good plants in the garden. The specially chosen plants form a tapestry of our beautiful genera internationally.

The best of the past and of the future, old and new. We hope that His Majesty enjoys these plants and that they give him great satisfaction in the years ahead.

The collection is gifted to His Majesty alongside a greetings card depicting a print of an original painting by Janet Bird who, on one spring day in 2019, painted a magnolia in her garden. Blue sky was the perfect background for the beautiful flowers. Janet grew up in Northern Ireland, now lives in Oxfordshire and she is inspired by the beauty of the countryside for her paintings.

Collection Coordinators

David Millais
Vice Chair

Sian Thomas
Chair of Wessex Branch

Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Group

List of plants donated by the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group members to mark the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III

***Rhododendron* ‘We’ll Meet Again’**

Three plants gifted by Rosemary Legrand, Dorset

A Hyde rhododendron hybrid from 1960. Named and registered by Rosemary Legrand in 2022. Blooms are soft pink fading to white, retaining prominent dark red central eye, widely funnelled. Very distinctive silver white indumentum on new foliage growth.

Named to celebrate the words of Vera Lynn during WWII and the same words used by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to comfort the nation during the pandemic. Chosen by Rosemary to continue the legacy of her father George Hyde, whose plants have been planted in Royal gardens and parks.

***Rhododendron davidsonianum* ‘Ruth Lyons’ AGM**

Chosen and gifted by Seamus O’Brien, Head Gardener of the National Botanic Garden Kilmacurragh, Wicklow, on behalf of The National Botanic Gardens of Ireland.

Rhododendron davidsonianum was seen and admired by His Majesty when on a visit to Kilmacurragh in May 2019, and he asked where he could get a plant. This AGM pink selection was raised in USA.

***Rhododendron fortunei* ‘Hachmann’s Best’ AGM**

Chosen and gifted by Seamus O’Brien, Head Gardener of The National Botanic Garden Kilmacurragh, Wicklow, on behalf of The National Botanic Gardens of Ireland.

Seen on the same visit to Kilmacurragh in 2019 and His Majesty shared the story of his grandmother showing him the nectaries in a corolla of the species, when he stopped to admire it. A pinky white form with strong growth, raised at Hachmann’s Nursery in North Germany.

***Rhododendron* ‘Sir Charles Lemon’ AGM**

Chosen and gifted by Seamus O’Brien, Head Gardener of The National Botanic Garden Kilmacurragh, Wicklow, on behalf of The National Botanic Gardens of Ireland.

The Kilmacurragh garden has many of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker’s veterans and this plant was raised from Hooker’s 1849 seed at Kew. A seedling sent to Sir Charles Lemon at Carclew, Cornwall proved to be a natural hybrid involving *Rhododendron arboreum* subsp. *cinnamomeum* and *Rhododendron campanulatum*. Ivory white flowers and a distinctive cinnamon rust coloured indumentum.

***Rhododendron* 'Bridgewater Beauty'**

Gifted jointly by Colin Mugridge and RHS Bridgewater, Salford

A new pink and white hybrid bred by Colin Mugridge, RCMG member. Named and registered by RHS Bridgewater to mark their official opening in 2021.

Colin Mugridge, a private grower of rhododendrons, lives in North Wales and was winner of the RHS Crosfield Challenge Cup in 2017. He has donated many of his plants to gardens in England including RHS Gardens and Ness Botanic Gardens and to Wales at Plas Newydd and National Trust Bodnant Garden.

Colin is an ex-RAF pilot, and he flew His Majesty in the early 1970's whilst he was serving in the Royal Navy. All these years later he is honoured to have grown a rhododendron for this Coronation Collection.

***Rhododendron* 'Avocet'**

Gifted by de Rothschild family, Exbury Gardens, New Forest, Hampshire

This plant was raised by Lionel de Rothschild in 1933, by crossing *fortunei* subsp. *discolor* x *fortunei* subsp. *fortunei*, creating a great woodland plant of excellent stature. Pink in bud opening to superb white scented flowers in May and June.

***Rhododendron arboreum* 'Rubaiyat'**

Gifted by de Rothschild family, Exbury Gardens, New Forest, Hampshire

This clone of *Rhododendron arboreum* was selected by Edmund de Rothschild in 1968 and named after a good wine! It has deep red flowers and darker spots flowering in March-April with distinctive silvery indumentum on the underside of the large glossy and leathery leaves. This clone has proved to be harder than other red forms of *Rhododendron arboretum* but does require woodland shelter.

Rhododendron arboreum is the National flower of Nepal that grows into a fine large tree and holds the Guinness Record for World's Largest Rhododendron.

***Rhododendron* 'Beau Brummel'**

Gifted by de Rothschild family, Exbury Gardens, New Forest, Hampshire

Raised by Lionel de Rothschild in 1934, this late flowering variety has scarlet red, waxy flowers with darker speckling in June. It has a spectacular ball-shaped truss and lovely matt green foliage and will perform best in light shade.

***Rhododendron* 'Bibiani'**

Gifted by de Rothschild family, Exbury Gardens, New Forest, Hampshire

This *arboreum* hybrid was bred by Lionel de Rothschild in 1934. It has gorgeous dark crimson flowers with maroon spots flowering in April/May. It is a vigorous plant with dark glossy foliage.

***Rhododendron* Loderi 'Sir Joseph Hooker'**

Gifted by Chris Loder, formerly of Leonardslee Gardens, West Sussex

This variety was raised by Sir Edmund Loder at Leonardslee Gardens before 1920. It has pinky white flowers with a faint green eye and is strongly scented. The original plant still grows at Leonardslee, but it is a particularly rare plant, which is not usually available.

***Rhododendron* 'Cowslip' AGM**

Gifted by National Trust Bodnant Gardens, North Wales

This *williamsianum* hybrid was raised by Lord Aberconway in 1930 at Bodnant Gardens, North Wales. It has beautiful bell-shaped flowers of pale primrose yellow to cream with pinky red markings in loose trusses. Flowering in April it has rounded leaves on a compact plant.

***Rhododendron* 'Fabia' FCC form, AGM**

Gifted by Michael McLaren KC, Bodnant House, North Wales

Raised by Lord Aberconway in 1927, this is the FCC form with deep orange bell-shaped flowers in loose trusses during May. A compact growing plant, which is best in a light shady position. The underside of the leaves has a fawn suede-like indumentum.

***Rhododendron* 'Kings Ride'**

Gifted by Millais Nurseries (Royal Warrant holders), Surrey

A fine foliage plant raised by Crown Estate Commissioners at Windsor in 1972. It has a neat domed truss of white bell-shaped flowers, speckled brown and flushed purple-pink when young, in late May. It looks good all year, with whitish tomentum in summer on the upper surfaces, turning glossy dark green in winter.

***Rhododendron* 'Queen Bee'**

Gifted by Millais Nurseries (Royal Warrant holders), Surrey

A lovely foliage plant, raised by noted breeder and bee-keeper Warren Berg in USA, and named in 1995. Rosy-pink in bud, opening to pinky white bell-shaped flowers in April. It has lovely fawn indumentum especially on new growth in June-July, turning brown underneath and silvery on top. It combines the lovely fawn indumentum from *Rhododendron tsariense*, with the toughness of *Rhododendron yakushimanum*, making a superb foliage plant that is hardy to -22 °C and suitable for small gardens and front of borders.

***Rhododendron* Loderi 'King George' AGM**

Gifted by Millais Nurseries (Royal Warrant holders), Surrey

This variety was raised by Sir Edmund Loder at Leonardslee Gardens before 1920. It is the most famous of all the Loderi hybrids and has pink buds which open to large trusses of pure white sweetly scented lily-like flowers with faint green markings in early May. In 2016, which was the centenary year of the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group, this plant was voted third of our member's favourite one hundred rhododendrons.

***Rhododendron* 'Queen Elizabeth II'**

Gifted by Millais Nurseries (Royal Warrant holders), Surrey

This variety was raised at Windsor and named by the Crown Estate Commissioners in 1969. Lovely glowing trusses of clear primrose yellow funnel shaped flowers in early mid-May. This is a vigorous strong growing plant of upright open habit.

***Rhododendron davidsonianum* EGM 149 AGM**

Gifted by Millais Nurseries (Royal Warrant holders), Surrey

Rhododendron davidsonianum was seen and admired by His Majesty on a visit to Kilmacurragh in May 2019. This clone was collected by Ted Millais in Sichuan in 1990 and has masses of pink to white flowers with a striking crimson blotch. Very free flowering in April – May.

***Camellia* 'Spring Festival'**

Gifted by Trehane Nurseries, Dorset

Spring Festival is a *Camellia cuspidata* hybrid. The miniature size flowers are mid-pink and rose-form double, with the stamens visible in the centre, and are produced prolifically from late March or early April, often continuing well into May.

***Camellia* 'Festival of Lights'**

Gifted by Trehane Nurseries, Dorset

A rare and recently introduced variety that was raised in New Zealand by Neville Haydon, who specialised in breeding disease free camellias, and who received a Queen's Service Medal in 2016. The 'lights' are multiple miniature single pastel pink blooms in winter-spring, on a plant with an upright columnar habit.

***Camellia* 'Kings Ransom'**

Gifted by Strete Gate Camellias, Devon.

This is a lovely camellia with loose peony form pale pink to deeper pink flowers, with broad wavy petals. Flowers throughout spring, above the evergreen compact bushy plant. Raised in 1942 by Magnolia Plantation and Gardens, Charleston, South Carolina, USA

***Magnolia* 'Star Wars' AGM**

Gifted by Charles Williams VMH, Caerhays Gardens and Burncoose Nurseries, Cornwall and chosen by John Anderson VMM, Keeper of The Gardens at Windsor Great Park.

Bred by the late former Group member Oswald Blumhardt, in New Zealand, this beautiful Magnolia is prized for its tremendous flowers which appear in March and often display until May. The huge tulip-shaped, pale pink blooms are flushed with a shade of deep pink. With a satin like appearance, they decorate the bare branches from late spring to early summer.

***Magnolia* 'Felix Jury' AGM**

Gifted by Charles Williams VMH, Caerhays Gardens and Burncoose Nurseries, Cornwall and chosen by the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group.

Bred by Mark Jury VMM (awarded the Veitch Memorial Medal 2023), Jurys Nursery, New Zealand, and named for his father Felix Jury, who was also holder of the VMM. Mark crossed two of his father's cultivars, 'Atlas' with 'Vulcan' and realized his father's dream.

It is a large *Magnolia campbellii* – type flower form, with strong colour on a smaller growing tree. This magnolia has huge, fragrant 12" deep rose-pink blooms, opening from port-coloured buds borne before the similarly impressive leaves appear in spring. Slowly makes a compact, upright tree.

Felix Jury was alive to see this bloom in 1990. The Jury family are thrilled and honoured that we have chosen a Jury bred magnolia for the Coronation Collection.

***Magnolia* 'Genie'**

Gifted by Charles Williams VMH, Caerhays Gardens and Burncoose Nurseries, Cornwall and chosen by the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group.

Bred by Vance Hooper, Waitara, New Zealand, *Magnolia* 'Genie' is the result of fifteen years of breeding cultivars of *Magnolia soulangeana* and *Magnolia liliiflora*. It is a fantastic variety with scented rich maroon flowers, ideal for a small garden because of the compact size, likely two flowering periods and rich colour of the flowers. Vance is passionate about getting good plants into people's gardens is honoured that *Magnolia* 'Genie' has been chosen and will be planted in a royal garden.

All the above donors are honoured to have their plants included in the Coronation Collection for His Majesty The King.

The Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group would like to thank them all very much indeed for their generosity.

March 2023