

***Rhododendron* x 'Fashion' 'Fashion' Azalea¹**

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Introduction

Most are relatively short and serve well as ground cover shrubs. Flowers are large, of various colors, and occur late (June) so they are not injured by cold.

General Information

Scientific name: *Rhododendron* x 'Fashion'

Pronunciation: roe-duh-DEN-drun

Common name(s): 'Fashion' azalea

Family: *Ericaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 10A (Fig. 1)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: mass planting; specimen; container or above-ground planter; attracts butterflies; cut flowers; accent; foundation

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

Description

Height: 3 to 5 feet

Spread: 4 to 6 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: slow

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

1. This document is FPS508, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date October, 1999. Reviewed June, 2007. Visit the EDIS Web Site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

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Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: salmon

Flower characteristic: spring flowering; fall flowering; winter flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch

Fruit cover: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not particularly showy; typically multitunked or clumping stems; can be trained to grow with a short, single trunk

Current year stem/twig color: brown

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: acidic; clay; loam; sand

Drought tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerances: poor

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

Winter interest: plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Leaves infected with *Phytophthora* dieback turn brown, roll, then drop off. The stem shrivels and a canker forms, eventually girdling the stem. Prune out diseased branch tips.

Powdery mildews of different genera form a white coating on the leaves.

Leaf spots may be caused by any number of fungi.

Use and Management

The most popular cultivars in the group are in the Gumpo series: 'Gumpo Pink' - pink ruffled flowers; 'Gumpo Rose' - rose colored flowers; 'Gumpo White' - white ruffled flowers, often with purple speckles.

Black vine weevil and strawberry weevil adults feed at night, notching the leaf margins and making holes in the leaves. The larvae feed on the roots and bark, girdling and killing the plant.

Lace bugs cause leaf yellowing, particularly when plants are heated in too much sun. Brown specks on the undersides of leaves are insect excrement. Sunny sites may lead to higher lace bug populations.

Mites cause leaf discoloration.

Scales may be found on branches and stems of unhealthy looking plants. Use dormant oil in spring.

Pests and Diseases

Gray blight infection follows an injury, such as winter injury. A spot, which is at first white with a dark brown margin, forms on the leaf. Protect plants from winter injury.

Dieback is also called *Botryosphaeria* canker. The leaves are attacked near the tips or at the margins; then spots form on the entire leaf. Leaf stalks and twigs are eventually infected. Prune off infected parts.