Carolina Rhododendron

Rhododendron carolinianum



Carolina Rhododendron flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 6 feet

Spread: 6 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4b

Other Names: Piedmont Rhododendron, Rhododendron minus

Description:

Stunning large shell pink blooms that may vary to dark pink, adorn this majestic variety in mid spring; an accent or border shrub that will definitely make a visual impact; absolutely must have well-drained, highly acidic and organic soil

Ornamental Features

Carolina Rhododendron is covered in stunning clusters of lightly-scented shell pink trumpet-shaped flowers with pink throats at the ends of the branches in mid spring. It has dark green foliage with brown undersides. The glossy narrow leaves remain dark green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Carolina Rhododendron is an open multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Carolina Rhododendron is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use

Planting & Growing

Carolina Rhododendron will grow to be about 6 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 6 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. You may want to keep it away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth, but will die in standing water. This plant should be periodically fertilized throughout the active growing season with a specially-formulated acidic fertilizer. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have rich, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is native to parts of North America.