



**For Immediate Release**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**TYLER ARBORETUM AND AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY LAUNCH  
RHODODENDRON TEST GARDEN**

MEDIA, PA (February 25, 2022) – Tyler Arboretum, one of the nation’s oldest arboreta and public gardens, today announced that it has entered into a partnership with members of the American Rhododendron Society (the Founding Task Force) to establish a testing ground for new rhododendron varieties created by Mid-Atlantic hybridizers.

“While many new and exciting hybrids have been developed over the past quarter century, for the most part, they’ve stayed in the hybridizers’ own gardens and not been distributed. Tyler has given us an opportunity to showcase these wonderful plants and potentially distribute them to the public”, according to the Founding Task Force.

The half-acre test and display garden will feature cultivars recently hybridized in the Mid-Atlantic region. The goals are to seek elepidote rhododendrons (large-leaf, evergreen hybrids) with less common coloration and moderate stature, record their performance over several years, and to publish the assessments of the trials. This garden will help educate visitors understand how to grow and care for them.

Plants will be donated by hybridizers and members of the American Rhododendron Society – District 8, which consists of three chapters: Greater Philadelphia, Valley Forge, and Lehigh Valley. The test garden will showcase approximately 30 - 40 cultivars with selection and evaluation performed by the Founding Task Force, several other rhododendron plant experts, and Tyler Arboretum staff. The Founding Task Force includes two hybridizers, Tom Ahern and Perc Moser, Michael Martin Mills, the North American Rhododendron Plant Registrar, and ARS Gold Medal recipient Karel Bernady.

“We would like to thank the American Rhododendron Society for making this unique opportunity possible. It speaks directly to our mission of preserving, enhancing, and sharing our heritage, collections, and landscapes so that we can create and inspire stewards of the natural world” states Mandy Santiago, Executive Director of Tyler Arboretum.

**About Tyler Arboretum**

Located west of the Borough of Media, in Middletown Township, John J. Tyler Arboretum traces its history as a Quaker family farm back to an original land grant by William Penn in 1681. Today, the arboretum's 650-acre property is comprised of landscaped gardens, historical buildings, and natural areas. Visitors of all ages can enjoy renowned horticultural collections, seasonal exhibits such as our treehouses, Lucille's Garden, Pollinator Preserve, magnificent heritage trees, and 17 miles of hiking trails. The arboretum's website, [www.tylerarboretum.org/calendar](http://www.tylerarboretum.org/calendar), provides details on upcoming events, educational opportunities, volunteer activities, and membership opportunities.

**About the American Rhododendron Society**

The American Rhododendron Society is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to encourage interest in and to disseminate information about the genus Rhododendron. Members' experience ranges from novice to expert. Society activities include public education, plant sales, flower shows, seed exchanges, and scientific research. The society provides an opportunity for people interested in rhododendrons and azaleas to communicate and cooperate with others via its publications, events, local and regional meetings, and international conferences. ARS chapters are located throughout the United States and Canada and in Europe.

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