

HOW TO PLANT & CARE FOR A RHODIE



(1) BEGIN BY:

CHOOSING EITHER
A RHODODENDRON

OR

A LOCATION

(2) DETERMINE:

WHAT IS ITS
PREFERRED EXPOSURE?

OR

WHAT VARIETIES WILL
GROW IN THIS EXPOSURE?
HOW MUCH WINTER SUN?

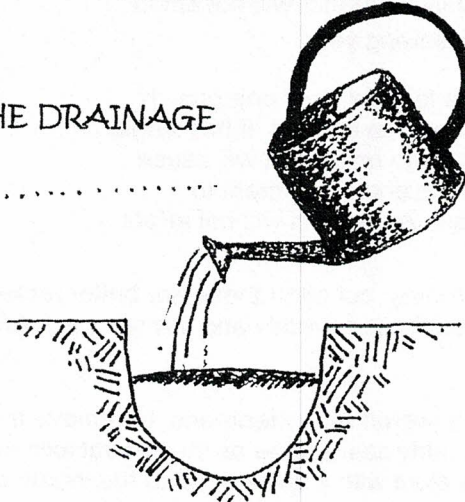
(3) MATCH THEM UP!

LOCATE AN OPTIMUM SITE

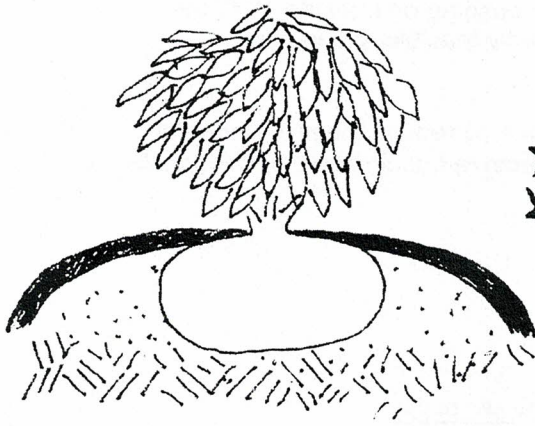
OR

FIND THE PERFECT
VARIETY FOR THE SPOT!

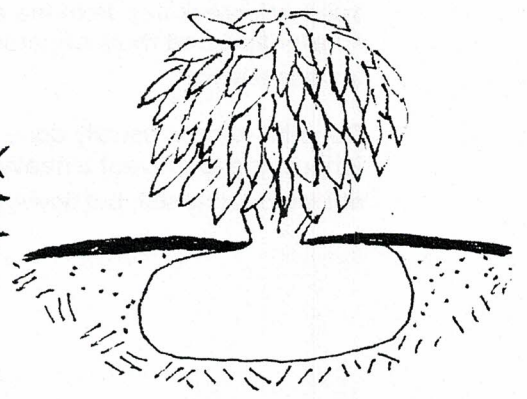
(4) TEST THE DRAINAGE



(5A) IF IT DOESN'T DRAIN
IN A FEW MINUTES
SEE PAGE 2



(5B) IF IT DRAINS WELL
WE'RE ALL SET
TO PLANT!



RHODIES NEED:
MOIST, WELL DRAINED
ACIDIC SOIL WITH A
HIGH ORGANIC MATTER

DIG A HOLE 2 TIMES THE
WIDTH OF THE ROOT BALL
& SLIGHTLY DEEPER
MIX THE GARDEN SOIL
W/ THE PEAT & BACKFILL.
DO NOT PLANT IT
DEEPER THAN IT WAS
GROWN ORIGINALLY.
MULCH. *WATER DEEPLY
1-2 TIMES PER WEEK.

(6)

YEARLY
MAINTENANCE

*FERTILIZE W/ AN ACID FERTILIZER EVERY SPRING
(USE LOWEST REC. RATE)

*DEADHEAD THE SPENT FLOWERS

*REMULCH WHEN NECESSARY
(KEEP IT 2-4")

Pruning and Dead-Heading

Normally very little pruning is needed. If a plant grows out over a walk or needs to be restricted for some reason, it may be pruned back moderately without fear that the plant as a whole will be damaged. It is often possible to do this pruning during the blooming season and have flowers for the house. Light maintenance pruning at the time "dead-heading" is done (see below), can help keep the plant in shape. Light to moderate pruning done at the time the plant is flowering or immediately thereafter will not affect flower bud formation for the following year.

Sometimes, as the plant starts to grow, only one growth bud at the end of a stem will begin to expand. If this single bud is broken out just as it starts to enlarge, it will cause two or more dormant buds at the end of the stem to expand, making a bushier plant. Again, this will not affect bud set for the coming year.

Old leggy plants may need pruning, but often these are better replaced with smaller newer varieties. Old plants, however, can be cut back severely and still recover, although it may be a while before they bloom again.

It is desirable, with the large flowered rhododendrons, to remove the withered flower clusters after the blooming season. This is fairly easily done as the central axis of the cluster, usually called a truss, will break free from the plant with a quick snap of the thumb pushing on the side. With the smaller flowered rhododendrons and azaleas, dead-heading is hardly feasible and in general unnecessary.

Dead-heading is usually done to make the bush look more attractive, to reduce the prevalence of fungus and to prevent a heavy set of seed. If it is not possible to remove the old flowers, it is usually not too detrimental, but flowering the next year may be reduced.

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