



Book Reviews (Margaret Hodgson)

Rhododendron & Azaleas, A Colour Guide

by Kenneth Cox

240 pages, over 1,200 colour photos.

Glossary, Bibliography and Index, photography credits. Hardbound, Copyright 2005, Published in Great Britain by The Crowood Press Ltd., Ramsbury, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 2HR

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Kenneth Cox was born in 1964 into a family of renowned plantsmen, the grandson of plant-hunter, writer and nurseryman Euan Cox and son of Peter Cox VMH. The three generations were and are considered the world's leading experts on rhododendrons. Kenneth, himself a nurseryman and author of six previous books on rhododendrons, has carved out his particular niche in the world of plant-hunting in leading expeditions to south and south-east Tibet and Arunachal Pradesh, India, from 1995 to the present.

Kenneth's managing director of the family firm, Glendoick Gardens Ltd in Scotland, a mail-order nursery and garden centre specializing in rhododendrons, azaleas, ericaceous plants, meconopsis, primula and other plants collected by the Cox family from around the world. He is married with two sons and in his spare time plays several musical instruments.

Rhododendrons & Azaleas, A Colour Guide is a compilation of a lifetime's experience that Kenneth Cox has rendered in a single volume on rhododendrons and azaleas. The first part of the book covers the history of rhododendrons, how they came to be collected from the wild and how they can be successfully cultivated. There are detailed chapters on landscaping, maintenance, and husbandry, pests, diseases, problems and disorders, propagation, and buying and collecting rhododendrons.

The core of the book is a rhododendron and azalea encyclopaedia, covering well over 4,000 varieties. This is a complete survey of the *Genus Rhododendron*, including all the cultivated hardy species, the most popular commercial rhododendron, hybrids, deciduous and evergreen azaleas species and hybrids. The list of cultivars is international with data from Australia, New Zealand, North America, Japan and Europe.

The book contains extensive assessment of performance of varieties for different countries and climatic conditions. The author has surveyed growers in all parts of the world where rhododendrons are widely grown to complete this data.

Over 1,200 pictures illustrate wild rhododendrons, cultivation practice, propagation and gardening design ideas, as well as over 1,000 plant portraits.