



Book Reviews (Margaret Hodgson)

Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Hybrids by Peter A. Cox and Kenneth N.E. Cox. Timber press, Portland, Oregon. Copyright 1988 Peter A. Cox and Kenneth N.E. Cox. 318 pages, 201 colour photographs, arranged alphabetically. Glossary, Bibliography, Listing of Rhododendron Societies, and Index. Hardbound. ISBN 0-88192-108-4 (hardcover).

Peter A. Cox(father) and **Kenneth N.E. Cox**(son) are jointly, and individually, the authors of many books on Rhododendrons and Azaleas. Glendoick Gardens evolved many years after Euan Cox, Peter's father, returned from a trip to Burma in 1919. Three generations have contributed to seed collections and hybridizing of rhododendrons to develop the Glendoick Gardens which opened in 1953, and the Glendoick Garden Centre, opening in 1973, followed by the Glendoick Café and Foodhall. The books written by Peter and Kenneth Cox are considered internationally as offering the most comprehensive lists of rhododendrons available to gardeners.

Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Hybrids by Peter A. Cox and Kenneth N.E. Cox is a comprehensive study of over 1400 hybrids and a further 500 clones and sister seedlings,

concentrating on commercially important hybrids. In the Introduction to this book, the two authors point out that the book deal only with rhododendron hybrids and azaleodendrons; hybrids of *vireyas* and *azaleas* **are not** included. To set the criteria for inclusion, the authors obtained the catalogues of 120 or more major rhododendron nurseries of Britain, Europe, U.S.A., Canada, Australia and New Zealand, which left out most of the Japanese hybrids. Extra weight was given to wholesalers and large retailers, which included the 2000 most commercially important available at the time. Then the cultivars that had received some testing and showed a promising long-term future were favoured for final inclusion. The evaluation information came from basic description obtained directly from the International Rhododendron Registry at Wisely. From there, information was added from the extensive collection of hybrids in their own garden and nursery centre, as well as work experience and travel in major hybridizing areas of Holland, West Germany, U.S.A. and Canada, and, lastly, communication with other hybridizers and hybrid growers around the world.

A typical description reads as follows:

ILAM VIOLET(name) cl.(clone)
(augustinii 'Electra' Stead form x russatum)
 (parentage) E. Stead 1947(Raiser)A.M.T.
 1983(Awards)
 +5f/ - 15c(Hardiness) EM – M(Flowers early May to mid-summer) Low(80-135 cm in 10yr)
 Deep violet-blue flowers in clusters of about 11. Small, dark, narrow leaves, reddish when young and bronze in winter on a fairly upright and compact but spreading twiggy plant. Foliage may yellow in too much sun and is pale with use. In some ways a better plant than 'St. Tudy' etc., but needs perfect drainage, which is perhaps why it is hard to keep going with a tendency to die after a few years. Buds up young, free-flowering and easy to root. This is Edgar Stead's most distributed hybrid. Available Pacific West Coast, New Zealand, Australia and U.K. This book is available in our library.