

NEW PLANTS IN PRODUCTION AT FLOWERWOOD NURSERY

JAMES B. BERRY

Flowerwood Nursery
P.O. Box 7
Loxley, Alabama 36551

1. *Abelia* × *grandiflora*, variegated prostrate form. This beautiful, creamy, variegated, ground-cover abelia is a sport of the cultivar, 'Sherwoodii'. White blooms in the summer and a prominence of pink-tinted foliage and stems in the winter means this plant is bound for greatness. The new growth terminals are also pink. Winter hardiness, drought tolerance, and old-time toughness are a few characteristics that are retained in this new cultivar of an old garden heritage. This plant will be properly named and patented by Flowerwood Nursery.

2. *Ilex crenata* 'Beehive'. This plant was developed by Rutgers University. 'Beehive' is a small-leaved holly that can be pruned easily to a beehive or pyramidal shape. The foliage color is gray-green. Winter was extremely cold last year and this proved to be the most tolerant *Ilex crenata* that we grow. It is a more attractive specimen than 'Highlander' and smaller in nature than 'Steeds' holly.

3. *Ilex crenata* 'Soft Touch'. 'Soft Touch' was found among an assortment of other small-leaved hollies by David Ellis and Dr. John Allan Smith of Magnolia Nursery. This beauty is mounding, compact, dark rich green, and very soft to the touch. 'Soft Touch' can be used like 'Wheeler's Dwarf' pittosporum, 'Helleri' holly, or dwarf yaupon, and has few problems.

4. *Rhododendron chapmanii* × *R.* 'George L. Taber'. We have called this hybrid 'Jim's Hybrid' but now have named it *Rhododendron* 'JBH.' It is the rarest plant I have ever found. *R. chapmanii* is the southernmost true rhododendron in North America, growing in five counties of north Florida. It is beautiful and endangered. I selected this individual from 1000 1-gal *R. chapmanii* grown from seed. It is a chance hybrid with a 'George L. Taber' azalea. It is a very vigorous grower that is infertile but easy to propagate vegetatively. This hybrid also exhibits some characteristics of both parents. It possesses a rhododendron truss with florets that are indica-sized. In addition, the bloom is light purple and fragrant. It is a heavy bloomer in spring and also shows blooms in the fall. 'JBH' is going to be a large-growing cultivar. The branching is twisting, spreading, and then upright. Winter foliage is tinted purple. The branches and bark surprise you in the winter with a plum tone. I think it is drought tolerant and probably hardier than you would expect.

5. *Rhododendron* 'Rebekah'. 'Rebekah' azalea is a selection of Tom Dodd, Jr. It is a seedling of *R.* 'Pride of Mobile.' 'Rebekah' caught my eye in Green's Garden Center and Nursery in Fairhope, Alabama. I stopped to see if it was a true rhododendron, as I thought. 'Rebekah' is a very early, prolific bloomer with cluster-forming, light pink, hose-in-hose blooms. The bush looks and grows like 'Pink Ruffles'. The pollen parent is unknown. This variety can safely be planted in south, central, and coastal Georgia.

6. *Rhododendron* 'Helen Curtis'. A Shammerello hybrid, 'Helen Curtis' azalea has a white, semidouble, 2½ in. bloom with 10 frilled lobes. The plant is semi-dwarf reaching 2 ft by 3 ft in 15 years. It is very hardy and a prolific bloomer. A sister seedling to 'Elsie Lee'. Possibly a replacement for 'Snow.'

7 *Ilex* 'Wetumpka' These hollies of unknown parentage or origination are growing in a landscape at the McDonald's in Wetumpka, Alabama. The owner thought they were American hollies. The landscape contractor planted them as 'Savannah'. Tom Dodd does not recognize it as any cultivar. The bush is broadly pyramidal with spiny, dark green foliage. Some years it does not fruit. It has fruited heavily after fall pruning. It is the most beautiful holly I have ever seen, and is definitely suited for central, coastal, and south Georgia.

8 *Ilex* 'Mary Nell' This is a three-way hybrid evergreen, (*I. cornuta* × *I. pernyi*. × *I. latifolia*, hybridized by the late Dr. Joe McDaniel of the University of Illinois, and selected and named by Tom Dodd. This selection was named in honor of Dr. McDaniel's wife, Mary Nell. The mother plant is beautiful, standing 15 ft tall, and only 8 ft wide at its base. Narrowly pyramidal, 'Mary Nell' has large, red berries set heavily with large, glossy, dark green, spiny leaves. 'Mary Nell' has survived in the ground in north Alabama so she should do well over most, if not all, of Georgia.

9 *Cornus florida* 'Stokes Pink' A selection made by Professor J. A. Foret of Louisiana, it makes a vigorous-growing, deciduous tree with ascending branches eventually making a graceful, round-headed tree 16 to 20 ft tall. Flower bracts are a clear, rich pink and flowers are produced in profusion during spring. Autumn foliage is a blend of reds and purples. 'Stokes Pink' is the best and most reliable pink dogwood for the Deep South including coastal areas, and may do well in more northerly areas.

10 *Cornus florida* 'Weaver's White' 'Weaver's White' is another proven winner for the coastal and lower South. This large-blooming dogwood is planted on the state capitol grounds of Florida in Tallahassee. Gene Ellis of Tallahassee Gardens is particularly impressed with this cultivar's ability to bloom and grow well in full sun. Large quantities of large white flowers are borne well before foliage appears. 'Weaver's White' does well on its own roots. Salable 5-gal plants are produced in only 17 months from a cutting.

11 *Prunus caroliniana* 'Cherry Ruffle' I found this selection of cherry laurel along the roadside in North Carolina about February 1 a couple of years ago. The mother tree stood 15 ft. tall and was a single-trunk specimen. It was in full bloom. The blooms were prominent, about the size of your small fingernail. Flowers, leaf petioles, and the fringe of the leaves were pink. The leaves were slightly twisted and somewhat upright. The waviness reminded me of *Ligustrum japonicum* var. *recurvifolium*. I have never seen a cherry laurel with noticeable blooms, color, and foliage like 'Cherry Ruffle'.

12. *Dianthus* sp., mountain dianthus I am unsure as to the species of this beautiful fine-textured gray perennial. As a ground cover, I think that it is far superior to santolina. Being both heat and cold tolerant, it could be widely used all over the South. I first admired it in a well-drained, full sun landscape close to Madison, Florida, the northeast part of the state. I have not seen it bloom, but I understand that in springtime it gives a complete dianthus flower show. I've noticed many growers around Knoxville, Tennessee, are producing and marketing mountain dianthus successfully.

13. *Lagerstroemia indica* 'Centennial Spirit'. A development by Dr. Carl Whitcomb while he was with Oklahoma State University, this beautiful crape myrtle is semidwarf, 6 to 8 ft. tall. The blooms are dark red and develop over an extended time. The stems are strong with a few basal suckers. It can be trained as a small tree, but I like it as a bush. 'Centennial Spirit' is mildew resistant with red-orange fall foliage.

14. *Lagerstroemia indica* 'Prairie Lace' Another release by Dr. Carl Whitcomb and OSU. A bicolor, medium pink bordered pure white. It, too, has an extended blooming season and is mildew resistant. New leaves are wine red; fall foliage is red to orange-red. 'Prairie Lace' is superior to other bicolors on the market.

15. *Nandina domestica*, compact form.* This is a new strain of an old garden favorite. I found this strain in a landscape in Texas. Among 24 regular growing nandinas, one plant was very different. The plant is compact by nature, growing 3½ ft tall in full sun and 5 ft in heavy shade. It is stoloniferous, making it nice for constricted beds, planters, and mass plantings. Unlike the west coast *N. domestica* compact form that is sparse and light green to yellow, Flowerwood's strain is rich green in the summer and nicely touched with red to purple in the winter. Berry set is good.

16. *Rubus idaeus* 'Bababerry' The words delicious, big, juicy, red, productive, and beautiful are appropriate when describing the 'Bababerry raspberry'. It is exciting to have a new raspberry for southern gardens. It is adapted to a wide range of soils and climates. Being disease resistant and extremely vigorous, it does well all over the South. The berries are large, sweet, and very good quality. They ripen in June and again in October. Prune when the June harvest is complete by mowing to a convenient height. The plant is patented, and we are excited to be offering this great new cultivar.

17. *Rubus* 'Navajo' Brand new blackberry from Dr. J. N. Moore and the University of Arkansas, 'Navajo' is thornless, and that makes it great for home gardeners. The fruit size is medium compared to large thorny types, and ripens 2 weeks later than other cultivars. The plant is erect growing. Again, this plant is patented, and we are licensed propagators and growers.

18. *Rhododendron* 'Variegated Dwarf' This is a very exciting azalea. It is a witch's broom of the patented plant 'Silver Sword' azalea, which is a sport of 'Girard Rose.' It has small leaves, compact and upright growth. I think the mature plant will be 3 ft high by 2 ft wide. The bloom is rose red and of normal size. Unlike most azalea witch's brooms, this sport shows great promise in small gardens and can be used where a small-size plant is appropriate.

19. *Rhododendron* 'Joseph Hill'. 'Joseph Hill' azalea is a North Tisbury hybrid, a product of Mrs. Julian (Polly) Hill's seed germination and introduction program with Dr. Teuneshige Rokuyi of Tokyo, Japan. Joseph Hill has a vivid red, 2¼ in., wavy bloom. The plant is a late, heavy bloomer and is the best ground-cover type that I know. It will be only 1 ft tall and spread 42 in. in 12 years.

* Bot. Ed. Note: The cultivar name 'Compacta' is now often erroneously used for various compact clones and seedlings of *Nandina domestica* as well as the original named clone. In order to avoid further confusion this new cultivar needs to be given a new cultivar name.