

Rhododendron Glossary – 2022

Abaxial – Pointing away from axis (**usually of the stem and leaves**) so usually the underside of the leaf.

Acuminate – **Tapering** to a point.

Acute – Pointed.

Adaxial – Pointing towards the axis (usually of stem and leaves) so usually underside of leaf.

Adpressed – Lying flat.

Affinity (aff.) - Closely related. Often used when a newly collected specimen does not quite fit a known species but is **closely related**.

Agglutinate – Glued together.

Alternate – Where only one leaf grows from a **node** on the stem (the alternatives being **whorled** and **opposite**)

Alveola – Cavity.

Anther – The part of the **stamen containing pollen grains**.

Apex – Tip.

Apiculate – a short sharp point on the leaf apex which is not stiff as in **mucronate and cuspidate**.

Arboreal – Tree-like.

Azalea Gall – is a fungal disease which can produce ugly distortions on evergreen azaleas and some rhododendrons.

Aristate – Awned, tipped by bristle.

Auriculate – Eared.

Axil – **Junction** of leaf and stem.

Axillary – Arising from the axil.

Base – The parts nearest the **petiole** (of leaf).

Bark Split – is a physical injury, the sap in the stem is frozen while the plant is in growth causing the bark to split. It can be fatal in severe cases.

Bistrate – With two layers or strata.

Bloom – a waxy covering appearing powdery (**of leaf and corolla surfaces**).

Bullate – Puckered or blistered.

Calcareous – Limey or chalky.

Calx, calyces – the outermost part of the flower bud, often left as a cover around the **seed capsule** after flowering. See *Rh thomsonii* as a good example.

Campanulate – Bell-shaped.

Candelabroid – An upright inflorescence produced when the rachis is long and the pedicels emerge from it stiffly. (**characteristic of subsection Pontica**).

Capitate – Collected in a dense knob-like head or cluster.

Capitellate – Mop-headed (**of indumentum of hairs**)

Capsule – The seed vessel at maturity.

Chlorosis – is yellowing of the leaves due to mineral deficiency.

Chromosome – Rod-like portion of the cell nucleus that determines hereditary characteristics.

Ciliate – With **fine hairs**.

Ciliolate – **minutely ciliate**

Cline – A population of plants in the wild showing systematic gradual gradation from one form to another.

Clone – A (named) clone is one propagated asexually by cuttings, tissue culture, grafts or layers. Finest forms of species are given clonal names eg. *calostrotum* “Gigha”

Compacted – Flattened (of indumentum, often the lower layer).

Concave – incurved.

Coniod – Shaped like a **cone**.

Contiguous – Touching.

Convex – Curved outward – opposite to **concave**.

Convolute – Rolled up longitudinally.

Cordate – With two round lobes forming a deep recess at the base.

Coriaceous – Leathery.

Corolla – The **tube and lobes** of the flower.

Crenate – Toothed (**of lepidote scales**)

Cultivar – A cultivated variety that is distinct from other varieties.

Cuneate – Wedge-shaped.

Cupular – cup-shaped.

Cuspidate – Tipped with sharp rigid point to a greater extent than mucronate.

Deciduous – Seasonally falling, not persistent.

Declinate – Curved downwards.

Decumbent – Horizontal for most of its length but turning up at the tip.

Decurrent – Extending down the stem or petiole.

Deflexed – Bent downwards.

Dendroid – Tree-like, branching from a distinct trunk (**of indumentum hairs**)

Detersile – Indumentum, scales or hairs that eventually shed.

Dichotomous – Divided in pairs.

Dimorphic – Of two distinct forms.

Diploid – Having two complete sets of **chromosomes** ($2n=36$)

Discoid – Disk shaped.

Eciliate – Without fine hairs.

Eglandular – Not glandular.

Elepidote – one of the two main groups of rhododendrons, that is without scales and cannot be hybridised with the other lepidote group.

Elliptic – Tapering equally at both ends (of leaves)

Emarginate – With notch at the end.

Embryologic – the development of the embryo into a plant.

Entire – margin undivided, without teeth.

Epapillate – without papillae (**not covered in pimples**)

Epidermis – the surface or outer area of cells (of leaves, stems)

Epiphyte – a plant growing on another plant without being parasitic.

Ericaceae – is a plant family that includes rhododendrons, heathers, kalmias, gaultheria and many other genera.

Erose – Eaten away (having an irregularly toothed margin as if gnawed)

Evanescent – soon disappearing (of indumentum)

Exserted – projecting beyond (usually of stamens and style longer than the corolla)

Falcate – Sickle-shaped.

Fasciculate – in bundles (of indumentum, hairs, etc.)

Fastigiate – With erect branches, leading to **columnar growth**.

Feltd – Matted with intertwining hairs (of leaf **indumentum**)

Ferruginous – Rust-coloured.

Fimbriate – With fringed margin (in rhododendrons usually hairs)

Filament – the stalk of the **stamen bearing the anther**

Flagellate – Whip-like – a long flexible stem that separates into individual hairs (of leaf indumentum)

Floccose – With soft **woolly hairs**.

Folioliferous – Bearing leaves, for indumentum hairs this refers to leaf shaped structures at the ends of at least some of the hairs.

Fulvous – Reddish-Yellow, tawny.

Genus – A group of closely related species, having general characteristics in common.

Glabrescent – becoming glabrous (without hairs)

Glabrous – without hairs.

Glandular – With glands.

Gland – an appendage discharging a sticky secretion. In rhododendrons, usually a hair on the end of which is a secreting bulb.

Glaucous – leaf green, strongly tinged with bluish grey, with greyish waxy bloom, for example Rh. Oreotrephes.

Globose – spherical.

Grex – all the seedlings of one cross in hybridizing.

Hirsute – covered with stiff long hairs.

Hormone – growth promoting hormone.

Hose-in Hose – Two corollas one within the other.

Hypercratiform – Goblet-shaped with spreading lobes (of corollas)

Imbricate – overlapping each other at the margins.

Indumentum – a hairy or woolly covering, particularly of the lower surface of the leaves.

Inflorescence – The whole flower body, **rhachis, pedicel and corollas.**

Lacerate – Torn or shredded, as with leaf scale margins in SS *pogonanthum*.

Lamina – Leaf blade, surface.

Lanate – Woolly, with soft mingled hairs.

Lanceolate – Lance shaped leaves, tapering more gradually towards the tip.

Lateral – On or at the side as opposed to the tip.

Lax – Loose trusses. Where the flowers hang downwards often between the foliage.

Lepidote – with scales opposite elepidote (without scales) many dwarf rhododendrons come into this group.

Ligulate – Strap-like.

Linear – Narrow shaped leaves with parallel sides.

Lobe – One of the divisions of a single structure into curved or rounded parts (of the corolla or calyx)

Long-rayed – With the ends divided into several long strands (of leaf indumentum).

Meristematic propagation – cell division from growing tip used to form a new plant.

Midrib – The central part of the leaf.

Monomorphic – Of one type or shape only.

Monotypic – a species forming a genus by itself.

Mucro – A hard sharp point.

Mucronate – Terminated by a hard sharp point.

Nectar pouches – vessels or swellings at the base of the corolla containing a sweet substance.

Nectary – A gland through which a solution of sugar is secreted.

Node – A point on the stem from which one or more leaves rise.

Oblique – with equal sides, as in the corolla of some SS grandia and some leaf bases in the genus.

Oblong – With parallel sides and blunt ends (but not narrow which would be linear (of leaf shapes)

Obovate – Reverse egg-shaped that is narrower near the petiole.

Orbicular - Circular (of leaves)

Obtuse – Blunt.

Opposite – Where two leaves grow from the same node on opposite sides of the stem (the alternatives being **alternate or whorled**)

Oval – More symmetrical than ovate or obovate and longer than broad (or leaf shapes)

Ovary – The underdeveloped seed vessel, often enclosed by the **calyx**.

Ovate – Egg-shaped – broader near the **petiole** (of leaf shape)

Ovoid – Egg-shaped solid with oval outline.

Papillate – Pimpled, covered with minute pimples (**papillae**)

Pectinate – Toothed.

Pedicel – Flower-stalk.

Pellicle – Lustrous skin-like covering to **indumentum**.

Pellucid – Transparent (usually of gland)

Petaloid – Petal like (usually of the stamen)

Petiole – Leaf Stalk.

Pilose – Covered with soft hairs.

Pistil – The **ovary, style and stigma**.

Pinching – a method of preventive pruning where the terminal bud or growth is removed to encourage branching and a denser growth habit.

Polyploid – With three or more complete sets of chromosomes.

Powdery mildew – A disease that attacks rhododendrons, causing leaf discolouration or leaf drop and can be fatal in severe infections. Can be controlled by fungicides in severe cases.

Precocious – Flowers produces before the leaves appear.

Pruinose – With waxy covering appearing powdery (of leaf and corolla surfaces).

Pseudowhorl – A circle of leaves looking like a **whorl**, but with the leaves emerging from separate **axils**.

Pubescent – Hairy, with short soft hairs.

Punctate – Dotted, with depressions or minute **glands** (usually of the lower surface).

Punctulate – Minutely dotted.

Pustule – A blister larger than a papilla.

Pyriform – Pear-shaped.

Racemose – Flowers borne on an unbranched main stalk. (**raceme**)

Radiate – Emerging from a common centre (**indumentum hairs**)

Recurved – Curved backwards.

Reflexed – Bent abruptly backwards.

Reticulate – Netted, like a network of veins.

Retuse – having a central depression in its rounded apex (of a leaf).

Revolute – Rolled backwards, margin rolled to the lower side.

Rhachis, rachis – The part of the inflorescence bearing the pedicels and flowers.

Rhomboid (rhombic) - Diamond-shaped, the sides have equal lengths.

Rosulate – Collected in a rosette (of indumentum hairs).

Rotate – A very short tube with spreading, almost flat **petals or lobes**.

Rugulose – Somewhat wrinkled.

Rust – a fungal disease which causes black spotting on the upper surface with corresponding reddish-brown patches of spores on the leaf lower surface.

Salver-shaped – With long slender tube and flat spreading petals.

Scabrid – Rough to touch, warty.

Scale – Minute disk like object found on branchlets, leaves and flowers. These can sometimes be seen with the naked eye but are better **magnified** so their form can be used to aid identification.

Self-sterile – infertile with its own pollen.

Sericious – Silky, covered in small hairs.

Serpentine – a magnesium silicate rock.

Serrate – Saw toothed with forward pointing notches (of leaf margins)

Serrulate – Minutely serrate.

Sessile – Without a stalk.

Seta – a bristle.

Setose – covered with bristles.

Setulose – covered in small bristles.

Sibling – Sister seedling of one cross in hybridisation.

Spathulate – With a broadly rounded apex gradually tapering into stalk, spatula shaped.

Spreading limb – outward expanding petal lobes of a tubular flower.

Stamen – The male organ of the flower bearing the pollen.

Stellite – Star-shaped, usually on a stalk (of indumentum hairs)

Stigma – The small pollen-receptive surface at the tip of the **style**.

Stoloniferous – bearing runners at the base of the stem.

Strigillose – Hairs smaller in size than **strigose**.

Stipitate – Elevated on the stalk.

Style – The thread like part of the **pistil, between the ovary and stigma**.

Subsessile – Almost sessile, on a very short petiole.

Suckering – producing roots from near or below ground level, often by rootstocks below a grafted union.

Sub – Section (SS) - in the Taxonomy of Rhododendrons, the genus is divided up into sub-sections – which may contain many related species. For instance, *triflora* ss contains mostly tall, upright- growing mainly scaly-leaved species with masses of small flowers.

Species – Must be different in at least two independent characteristics and have distributions in the wild distinct from their close allies.

Subspecies (SSP) – a subspecies of a species is different in small taxonomic characteristics from other members of the species (that is taxon within the species). Although subspecies can breed with each other, they are usually found in different locations or in different populations.

Variety (var.) - is defined where there is a differing but related form throughout much of the geographical area occupied by the species.

Forma – a distinct form found in cultivation whose taxonomic status had not yet been found.

Swarm – a large group of natural hybrids found in the wild.

Synonym – where a species has been superseded or sunk in another species.

Tapering – gradually decreasing in breadth (especially when the ovary tapers on to the style).

Taxon, taxa – General term for any group of plants.

Taxonomy – The science of classification, description and identification.

Terminal – At the end of a shoot.

Tesselate – Mosaic-like (of leaf veins or indumentum)

Testa – the hard covering of the seed.

Tetraploid – with four sets of chromosomes.

Tomentum – Dense hair covering, often on the upper surface of the leaves, hence **tomentose**.

Triploid – with three sets of chromosomes.

Truncate – Straight across.

Truss – A cluster of flowers on a single stalk (**rhachis**).

Type – Strictly, the original introduction of a particular species.

Tube – When present, the part of the corolla nearest to the pedicel.

Undulate – Having a wavy margin.

Unistrate – With one layer or stratum (of indumentum).

Velutinous – velvety.

Venation – The arrangement of the veins.

Ventricose – Swollen on one side, as with some *ss grandia* corollas.

Verrucose – Having a wart like on nodular surface.

Vesicle – A small bladder containing fluid.

Vesicular – Bladder-shaped (**of glands or scales**)

Villous, villose – With long soft hairs.

Vine weevil – a pernicious insect pest which notches foliage and whose grubs eat the roots and bark.

Viscous, viscid. - Sticky.

Whorl – Where three or more leaves or branches grow from the same **node** on a stem, giving rise to a “circle” of leaves, often near the end of the stem.

Winged petiole – Broad or flattened often tapering into the leaf base (of petioles)

Zygomorphic – Flower of irregular shape that can be divided into equal halves along one vertical line only.