

In May 2004, I had a wonderful garden packed journey to Sweden and Denmark. Everything went as planned. I drove some 3400 km, visited 17 gardens and/or nurseries during 6 days and took some 400 photos mainly on rhododendrons and magnolias. The people I met were all very friendly and I almost understood that funny Danish language. ☺ I did speak Swedish and sometimes switched to English.

I'll give here a summary of places that I visited.

1. **Bergius Botanical Garden** (Bergianska Trädgården), 5 km north of Stockholm, Sweden.
Beautiful settings and a small rhododendron garden that includes some nice *R. tomentosum* ssp. *subarcticum* × *lapponicum* plants from Bengt Kihlman.
2. **Lennart Söderberg & Ann-Marie Åsheden**, Uppsala, Sweden.
The writers of a new book on hardy Magnolias for Sweden. I did buy that magnificent book. Their garden was quite new, a lot of plants, different interesting magnolias on a hill. The garden should be worth visiting after some years.
3. **Uppsala University Botanical Garden** (Uppsala Botaniska Trädgård), Uppsala, Sweden.
A very formal garden, some flowering magnolias, but not many rhododendrons. Bengt Kihlman's old plant beds had not been taken care of. Sad sight.
4. **Bengt Kihlman**, Uppsala, Sweden.
I got a very warm welcome from Bengt and Irma Kihlman. We had long, good discussions on hybridization of *Ledums*, looked at Bengt's crossings and took a walk in a beautifully set up garden. The plants were thriving extremely well on peat blocks. This was a visit that I do not easily forget.
5. **Karlstad City Garden** (Karlstad Stadsträdgården), Sweden.
The City Garden has been totally rebuilt and I was impressed on the systematically set up plant areas. Anders Blomqvist gave me a guided tour around the garden. There were several flowering magnolias, distinct areas for hardy rhododendron species, hybrids and azaleas.
6. **Anders Blomqvist**, Hammarö, Karlstad, Sweden.
Anders wanted to show me his own garden and of course I had nothing against it. The garden was small, but packed with a lot of interesting plants, some rhododendrons (for example a nice *R. macabeum* × *brachycarpum* ssp. *tigerstedtii*), but above all huge, up to 10 meter high flowering magnolias.
7. **Gullmarsfjorden Nursery** (Gullmarsfjordens Plantskola), 100 km north of Gothenburg, Sweden.
A place to visit when you want very special magnolias and other hard to find plants with affordable prices. I did buy several magnolias (named ones and F2-crosses), a good selection of Minnesota azaleas and summer flowering azaleas (Lollipop, Pink and Sweet, Popsicle, Weston's Innocence). Tommy Ahnby was in Norway, but I got good service from his wife Vivi. I started to negotiate the possibility of importing plants to the members of our Rhododendron Society.
8. **Gothenburg Botanical Garden** (Göteborg Botaniska Trädgård), Sweden.
This is almost heaven for a rhododendron lover! Four hours was not enough to walk among the

rhododendrons.

9. **Sofiero Castle and Garden**, Helsingborg, Sweden.
A very beautiful setting of rhododendron species and hybrids around the Castle valley.
10. **Jens Birck**, Copenhagen, Denmark.
I got a very warm welcome. The small garden was packed with an amazing number of interesting, beautiful rhododendrons. I got pollen from several plants to be used in my crossings.
11. **Kærnehuset Nursery and Garden** (Kærnehusets Staudegartneri), Fredensborg, near Helsingør, Denmark.
The garden has in nice surroundings a large collection of rhododendrons from Svend Hansen and Jens Birck. Jens was a good guide on our walk through the park. This was one of the highlights of my journey even if it rained on that day. ☺
12. **Copenhagen Botanic Garden** (Botanisk Have - Københavns Universitet), Denmark. The old rhododendron collection is pretty small, but there is now a new area of just planted rhododendrons. Within some years this is going to be place to be visited.
13. **Hans Eiberg**, Smørum, Copenhagen, Denmark.
Nice garden with some special rhododendrons. I got from Hans a Danish publication that includes his writing on the relationship of different rhododendron species based on DNA analysis. Very interesting article that needs some thought when trying to interpret the Danish text.
14. **Svend Åge Askjær, Hvidbjerg Planteskole**, Skive, Jylland, Denmark.
One of the most beautiful rhododendron gardens that I have seen. Grounded some 30 years ago, now full of nice looking species and hybrids in forest surroundings. This is a must for future visits! I also bought some plants from Svend.
15. **Claus Erik Jørgensen, Rhododendron-Haven**, Tørring, Jylland, Denmark.
A large selection of rhododendrons, both species and hybrids. The species plants are grafted and grown at the site. There were two large display gardens, one for hybrids and one for species. I started to negotiate the possibility of importing plants to the members of our Rhododendron Society.
16. **Jørgen Halse**, Fjeldsted, Fyn, Denmark. (Past president 1998-2000 of Rhododendronforeningen).
At first sight a small garden, but behind corners there were some real surprises. A large selection of species, not so many hybrids. A garden worth visiting.
17. **Kaarel Voitk**, Tyresö, Stockholm, Sweden.
Old rhododendrons around the house, also some of his own hybrids. Kaarel's main garden is on Hiiumaa, an island belonging to the Estonian archipelago. That is on my list of places to visit when I'll next time go to Estonia.