

# Florida Flame Azalea

## *Rhododendron austrinum*

Florida Flame Azaleas are rather straggly and upright when very young but will spread out. Rich, moist, acid soil in light shade with some direct sun, protected from harsh winds, is an ideal location for Florida Flame Azaleas. Azaleas grow best in filtered shade from tall trees, but will bloom poorly when in root competition with trees. Plants are very sensitive to drought. The soil must be open and porous, yet able to retain water well. A thick mulch is recommended to help ensure adequate moisture retention and root growth. Locate the plants so that they can receive frequent irrigation. Pruning is seldom necessary except to control shoots that extend above the normally mounded shape. Since plants bloom on the previous year's growth, any desired pruning should be done in spring after flowering. Pinching new shoots when they are several inches long increases branching and flower display.

**Type:** deciduous medium shrub

**USDA hardiness zones:** 6b through 9b

**Uses:** container or above-ground planter; trained as a standard; near a deck or patio; accent; border; attracts butterflies; attracts hummingbirds

**Origin:** native to Florida

**Height:** 6 to 10 feet      **Spread:** 4 to 8 feet

**Plant spacing:** 3 to 5 feet

**Light requirement:** part shade/part sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; acidic; loam; sand

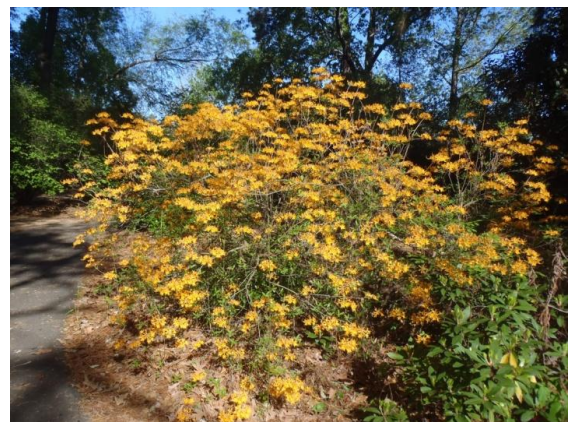
**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

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Photos: NC State Extension