

Highstead Kalmia Collection

Mountain Laurel

Mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), the State Flower of Connecticut, grows extensively and naturally at Highstead. This led to the decision to devote a section of the grounds to a concentrated display of laurel species, forms and cultivars.

The Kalmia Collection at Highstead is only a five minute walk from the Barn, but visitors should be prepared to spend at least one hour viewing the Collection and absorbing the beauty of the surrounding woodland.



Highstead's Kalmia Collection presents the opportunity to compare the characteristics of mountain laurel found in the wild with plants which have been cultivated. As you start out from the Barn ① look at the mountain laurel on the slope adjacent to the terrace and see as great a natural variation in bloom color as you will find on the property. This stand of mountain laurel is self-sown. As you walk toward the Kalmia Collection, make note of the native stands of mountain laurel that are part of the woodland understory. ② Here you will find naturalized mountain laurel flowering less prolifically than the laurel near the Barn, with many stiff, often leggy limbs supporting crooked branches. The Collection itself ③, shows a much wider range of flower color, and a much lower and denser growth habit. These are traits achieved through selection and cultivation.

The Three Kalmia Species at Highstead

K. latifolia

Mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), also known commonly as calico bush and spoonwood, is a broad-leaved evergreen shrub. It rarely exceeds a height of twelve feet. The natural

range of this species is along the east coast of the United States, from southern Maine to northwestern Florida, and as far west as Mississippi.

K. angustifolia

Sheep laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*), has a much narrower leaf than mountain laurel. It is also shorter, attaining a height of only three to four feet. This plant can be harmful to sheep and other livestock. When eaten in sufficient quantity it can be fatal.

K. cuneata

White wicky (*Kalmia cuneata*), is the only deciduous member of the *Kalmia* genus. Found growing natively in a narrow band which runs from North Carolina into South Carolina, it is one of the rarest shrubs in North America.

Cultivars and Forms

In the wild, there is great variation in the color of the bud and flower of mountain laurel. Differences in foliage shape and overall growth habitat can be noted as well. Through selection and breeding, these naturally occurring differences have been the source of many beautiful cultivars. Much of this work was done by Dr. Richard A. Jaynes, whose book, "Kalmia, Mountain Laurel and Related Species," is recommended reading for additional information.

The Collection at Highstead

Set on a previously disturbed site, the Kalmia Collection was begun in 1989. The site was filled and graded, footpaths established, and grouped plantings of several *Kalmia* species, forms and cultivars set out on raised beds. Companion plantings were also added. Pruning and deadheading, along with weeding, mulching, fertilizing and deer spraying were some of the horticultural practices performed regularly to maintain the Collection.

Today, the Kalmia Collection is transitioning from a highly cultivated formal display of specimen plantings toward a naturalistic landscape resembling the surrounding oak forest. The goal is to create a landscape that evolves naturally with the least amount of inputs and maintenance required to maintain the broader demonstration and aesthetic value of the Collection.

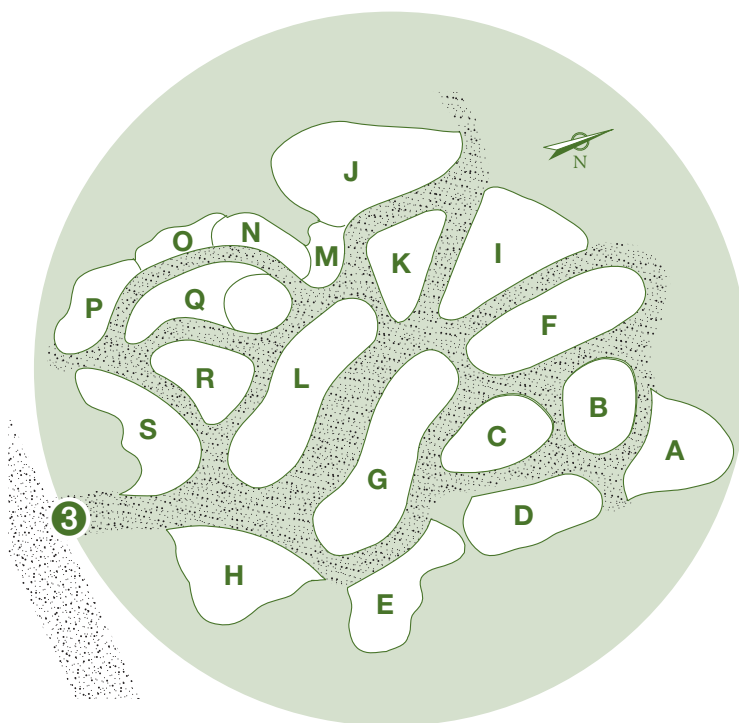


*Peak time for viewing mountain laurel in bloom is usually the second week of June.
Bloom time can vary as much as one week either way, depending on weather conditions.
Please call ahead to make a reservation, and to check on the timing and condition of the bloom.*

Plant List



Cultivar/Form	Qualities	Bed(s)
Mountain Laurel	<i>Kalmia latifolia</i>	
'Alpine Pink'	pink flower with white center	H,S
'Angel'	pure white flower	S
'Baystate'	coral-colored flower	G,H,S
'Big Boy'	pink bud, soft pink flower	G,L
'Bravo'	dark pink bud and flower	S
'Bridesmaid'	deep pink flower with white center	H
'Bullseye'	white flower with cinnamon band	B,H,S
'Candy'	dark pink bud, dark pink flower	H
'Carol'	deep red bud, white flower	G,H,S
'Carousel'	white flower with cinnamon band	H,S
'Comet'	white flowers and a more dense plant habit	S
'Elf'	semi-dwarf habit, light pink-white flower	G,Q
'Firecracker'	bright red bud, opens to light pink flowers	F,L
'Freckles'	pink bud, white flower w/ ten cinnamon spots	D,S
'Fresca'	white flower with burgundy band	G,S
'Galaxy'	cinnamon-maroon pigment on inside	Q
'Good Show'	deep pink in bud, rich pink when open	G,S
'Heart of Fire'	red bud, pink flower	S
'Hearts Desire'	red bud, cinnamon-red flower	G
'Hoffman's Pink'	medium pink in bud, light pink when open	F
'Kaleidoscope'	cinnamon flower edged in white	G,I,S
'Keepsake'	cinnamon maroon flower inside w/white edge	F, Q
'Little Linda'	semi-dwarf habit, red bud, pink flower	R
'Madeline'	only double-flowered cultivar known	F
'Meteor'	new 'Shooting Star' type, lavender-pink	G
'Nancy'	bright red bud, clear pink flower	S
'Nathan Hale'	red bud, pink flower	G,S
'Olympic Fire'	deep red bud, pink flower	S
'Olympic Wedding'	pink bud, pink flower with maroon band	S
'Ostbo Red'	bright red bud, pink flower	L
'Paul Bosley'	rich pink bud, medium to strong pink flower	Q
'Peppermint'	white flower with candy stripe	F
'Pequot'	red bud, light pink flower	L
'Pink Ball'	light pink flower	J
'Pink Charm'	red bud, rich pink flower with red ring	E,L
'Pink Surprise'	deep pink bud, pink flower	L
'Pinwheel'	white flower with cinnamon band	L
f. polypetala	flower with feathery petals	Q



Cultivar/Form	Qualities	Bed(s)
'Pristine'	compact habit, white flower	L
'Quinnipiac'	red bud, soft pink flower	L
'Raspberry Glow'	deep red bud, deep pink flower	F,L,O
'Sarah'	red bud, pink-red flower	C,D,F,L
'Sharon Rose'	buds bright red, fading to pink when open	F,H,L
'Shooting Star'	white flower, distinctly lobed	F,P
'Silver Dollar'	pinkish bud, large white flower	C,F,L
'Tightwad Too'	medium pink buds, resists leafspot	Q
'Tinkerbell'	semi-dwarf habit, deep pink flower	R
'Twenty'	dark pink bud, medium pink flower	H,J
'White Mountain'	white bud, sometimes tinged pink, white flowers	S
'Willowcrest'	pink flower, narrow leaf form	L
'Willowood'	willow-leaved, flowers light pink to white	F
'Window'	large, light-pink flowers, darkening with age	F
'Yankee Doodle'	red bud, white flower with maroon band	L
Hybrids	<i>Kalmia polifolia</i> x <i>K. microphylla</i>	
'Rocky Top'	a cross of Eastern Bog & Western Alpine Laurels	Q
Sheep Laurel	<i>Kalmia angustifolia</i>	
f. candida	low growing, white flower	K
'Hammonasset'	bright rose pink to bluish rose	Q
'Poke Logan'	shiny leaves and light pink flowers	M
'Royal Dwarf'	rose-pink flowers in June and again in August	K
'Wintergreen'	deep colored foliage, especially in autumn	J
White Wicky	<i>Kalmia cuneata</i>	
species	deciduous, small white flower	Q

Facility Notes: For the protection of the fragile plant environment, please note:
 No dogs, bicycles, play equipment, food or beverages • Kindly stay on the paths • Please refrain from picking plants and flowers
 • No smoking