



## Satsuki Azalea Notes, November:

**H**ere are my methods for placing my azaleas into storage for the winter, keeping in mind that Satsuki Azaleas are evergreens.

I clean up my pots and soil of debris and weeds. I then spray with a systemic about a week before putting them into winter storage. I like to use Orthonex III because it is an insecticide, a miticide and a fungicide. Then, just prior to putting them away, I spray with Neem oil. Because azaleas are prone to root rot, the last watering is with Ban-Rot as a precautionary measure. Allowing the Neem to soak into the soil will also provide this protection.

If you have problems with ants or other soil pests, sprinkle Diaznon or Dursban on your soil, before putting them into storage.

I place my best azaleas into storage where the temperature does not drop below 25 degrees. As I have done in the past, I will place azaleas that are just growing and not in bonsai pots, into my unheated greenhouse where the temperature drops slightly lower. This has worked out well with the larger growing containers. Keep an eye on them and don't let them dry out.

Every year at this time I am inundated with calls about the leaves on azaleas turning yellow and falling off. This is a part of a natural process. Some varieties of azaleas have "diomorphic" leaves (2 sets) i.e. spring and summer leaves. The spring leaves that unfold at flowering time, drop off in fall and winter. The colder the winter, the heavier the leaf drop. Just keep them cleaned up so they don't get moldy on the surface of your soil.

The season is almost over and our azaleas will soon be slumbering the winter away.