

American Camellia Society
The American Camellia
Yearbook
BRADFORD KING ARTICLES

2020 – 2025



C. reticulata 'Frank Houser Variegated'

Table of Contents

	<p>American Camellia Yearbook 2022</p>	
		<p>Camellia Flower Color Size and Form are Genetic</p>
		<p>Why Do Camellia Leaves Have Veins</p>
		<p>What is a Cultivar?</p>
		<p>The Wonderful March Camellias</p>
		<p>Swarthmore College Camellia Garden</p>
		<p>Breeding Hybrids with <i>C azalea</i></p>
		<p>Contemporary <i>C reticulata</i> Hybridizers</p>
		<p>Evaluating New Camellia Cultivars</p>
	<p>American Camellia Yearbook 2021</p>	
		<p>Virology and Camellias</p>
		<p>Camellias From Far Away Places</p>
		<p>Japanese Camellias with Wonderful Names</p>
		<p>Camellia Trail Gardens in Louisiana</p>
		<p>What is Beauty?</p>
	<p>American Camellia Yearbook 2020</p>	
		<p>Camellias From The Rising Sun</p>
		<p>Camellia Fruit</p>
		<p>Camellias and Insects</p>
		<p>A Tribute to Dr. Clifford Parks</p>

		Estate Gardens Are Important in American Camellia History
		Summer Reblooming Hybrids From China



‘FRANK HOUSER’

[Return to TOC](#)

Camellia Flower

COLOR, SIZE, AND FORMS ARE GENETIC

BY BRADFORD KING

A color is defined by three attributes. **Hue**—the dimension which decides what color it is, e.g., red, green, or blue. **Brightness**—the total amount of light reflected by each color. **Saturation**—the purity, brilliance, or intensity. Perception of a flower’s color is influenced by multiple factors—the light, the background, such as leaves surrounding the flower, and personal subjectivity. ‘Frank Houser’, the most popular *C. reticulata* grown today, illustrates this. The *Camellia Nomenclature* describes it as a red flower, Nucchio’s Nurseries describe it as rose red, and the ACS website, a “deep glow-



‘GUILIO NUCCIO’

ing pink to red with darker veins.” Which one is correct? ‘Frank Houser’, at various times of the year, microclimates, and even on the same plant, could be bright red, rose red, or deep pink. It might be glowing pink or flat pink. Many camellias are described as rose red besides ‘Frank Houser’, such as *C. japonica* ‘Covina’, ‘Daikagura’, and ‘Guilio Nuccio’. Rose red is a cheerful color first recorded as a color name in 1382. The color is inspired by the beauty of red roses. This color is softer than bright red. Interior decorators value it for adding romance, tenderness, and suggesting passion in a subtle way. It is a beautiful color. The rose red hue of camellias is illustrated here by ‘Frank Houser’ and ‘Guilio Nuccio’.

Like rose red, there are camellias that are described as rose pink, such as ‘Elegans’, ‘Drama Girl’, ‘Katie’, ‘R. L. Wheeler’, and ‘Rudy’s Magnoliaeflora’. Rose pink is a soft feminine color that symbolizes grace, joy, and admiration. Two classic rose pink camellias are ‘Elegans’ (Chandler), which has a large to very large anemone flower, and the very large semidouble ‘R. L. Wheeler’.

‘Tama Americana’ is described as having a rose red flower with a wide white border and ‘Tama Beauty’ as a rose pink bloom with a white border.



‘ELEGANS’

The color tone is one of the differences between these ‘Tama no ura’ seedlings.

In the 1960s, Dr. Clifford Parks studied the inheritance of camellia flower color. He made several conclusions that are still valid.

First, that white is recessive to red and pink for *C. japonica* and *C. reticulata*. However, there are some interesting exceptions as illustrated by the variable number of white seedlings when ‘Kuro-tsubaki’, the black camellia,



‘TAMA AMERICANA’



‘TAMA BEAUTY’



‘R. L. WHEELER’

is a parent. It is assumed that when the abnormal long gene that produces the black color, red stems, and roots is not inherited, there will be other colors, including a few white flowers.

Second, there is a “shader gene” which results in shades of pink as is seen in ‘Berenice Boddy’, ‘Nuccio’s Carousel’, and ‘April Remembered’. Most likely, light and medium shades of pink are due to several genes.



‘BERENICE BODDY’ X ‘DR. TINSLEY’ = ‘APRIL REMEMBERED’

While we cannot see genes, we can infer that it is the genes of ‘Berenice Boddy’ X ‘Dr. Tinsley’ that produced the shading in ‘April Remembered’.

Third, rose pink (a light pinkish red color) is most likely the product of a cross between a red flower and a white flower.

Fourth, stripe variegations may be the result of one gene that expresses itself in several ways. This is illustrated by ‘Oo-La-La’ and its genetic sport ‘Ay-Ay-Ay’. We can infer they share the same stripe gene, and it is expressed in diverse ways. An alternative theory would be that the gene responsible for striping mutated, thus determining the different flowers. I tend to think it is due to the mutation. What do you say?

Fifth, yellow petal color is a recessive trait.

SIZE

Flower size is most likely controlled by multiple genes. It would be expected that flower size between the same two cultivars will show a normal distribution with the mean being the average of the two parent’s sizes. However, Dr. Ackerman’s observation, based on scented interspecific camellia hybrids, concluded that hybrids had smaller flowers than the average of the two parents. Size of flowers will follow the statistical principle of regression to the mean. However, let us keep it simple. A camellia breeder would expect large flowers from larger parents. A small seed parent paired with a large pollen parent would most likely get a seedling larger than the small parent and smaller than the larger parent but most likely not an average of the two



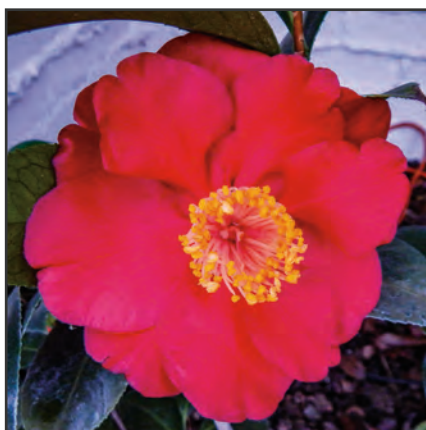
‘OO-LA-LA’



‘AY-AY-AY’



‘TAMA PEACOCK’



‘SAN DIMAS’

sizes. This is illustrated by ‘Tama Peacock’, a small flower, when crossed with ‘San Dimas’, a large flower, resulted in a medium flower ‘King’s Cup’.

Flower Forms

The formal double flowers do not produce seeds because they are female and male sterile. A single form flower pollinated by a single form flower will have mostly, if not all, single form flowers. According to Dr. Parks, a single



‘TAMA PEACOCK’ X ‘SAN DIMAS’ = ‘KING’S CUP’

form flower pollinated by a semi-double flower will have about 50 percent of each and rarely any other flower type. A semidouble form times a semidouble form will have approximately a third single form blooms, with most others semidouble, but a few loose peonies and rose form may occur. It is highly unlikely to get a formal double flower or full peony. A semidouble form times a peony form will produce more complex flowers—peonies, rose form, and formal double. As early as the mid-1800s, Charles Mason Hovey discovered that all flower forms can occur when a semidouble is crossed with a peony flower. According to Dr. Parks, the yield of seedlings from a peony form times a peony form is low but have resulted in all the flower forms. Therefore, if one wants complicated flower forms, the seed parent should be a good seed setting semidouble flower and the pollen parent a peony flower. In addition, this is the most likely manner to get a formal double flower.

This is how Howard Asper got the formal double *C. reticulata* ‘Valentine Day’. He used *C. reticulata* ‘Crimson Robe’, which has a semi-double flower, and pollen from *C. japonica* ‘Tiffany’, which has a loose peony to anemone form.



X



=



‘CRIMSON ROBE’ X ‘TIFFANY’ = ‘VALENTINE DAY’



‘HANA-DAIJIN SPECIAL’

WHY DO CAMELLIA LEAVES Have Veins?

BY BRADFORD KING

Camellias need water and nutriment to grow and thrive. The plant absorbs water through the roots and uses their vascular system to move the water and nutriment up into the leaves. The xylem tissue in the veins moves water and nutriment upwards, and the phloem tissues move the water and nutriment around the plant. Phloem flows in the direction needed to sustain the plant.

The veins form a large pattern like a net. The larger veins carry water into the leaf, and the smaller veins spread it throughout the leaf. The large veins also transport nutriment back to the main parts of the plant. These two tissue types make up the “vascular bundle.” The midvein also provides structure and support to the leaves which help the camellia hold its shape. While all camellia leaves have a midvein, a good example of a prominent midvein is *C. nitidissima*.

The “venation pattern” is the way veins are arranged in a leaf.

C. reticulata illustrates the “dicots pattern” which is a reticulate venation-



C. nitidissima



‘DR. CLIFFORD PARKS’ CLOSE UP



‘SHISHI-GASHIRA’ LEAVES

tion providing the name for this camellia species.

Leaf parts include a leaf blade (lamina), a midrib, a margin, and a petiole which attaches the leaf to the stem as illustrated by ‘Shishi-gashira’.

An especially attractive leaf margin is illustrated by *C. sasanqua* ‘Hana-Daijin Special’.

Leaves are classified as either alternate, spiral, opposite, or whorled; camellia leaves are “alternate” as illustrated by *C. grijsii*.



‘HAPPY HARLEQUIN’



C. grijsii

The broad flat green part of the leaf is the leaf blade which absorbs sunlight and carbon dioxide used for photosynthesis. Leaves can move to maximize their surface in order to collect sunlight.

Camellia flowers do not have veins. However, it is a useful term to describe a camellia with lines on the petals as veined. In other words, the “petal veins” may look like veins, but they lack the tissue that can carry water and nutriment. An example is ‘Happy Harlequin’ which is described as having a veined strawberry pink flower with rose red stripes.

In summary, camellia veins supply water and nutriment to the leaves as well as provide structure and support for the leaves which assist in shaping the plant.



What is a **Cultivar**?

BY BRADFORD KING

The term “cultivar” means a cultivated variety. It is a collection of plants selected for desirable characteristics that are maintained during propagation. Camellias, as well as most popular ornamental garden plants, are produced by breeding and selection for flower color, form, size, plant growth habit, and foliage. A new camellia cultivar needs to be distinctive—easily distinguished from any other cultivar. The cultivar needs to be uniform—that it retains the characteristics when propagated. This includes sports which are genetic mutations that are stable—when propagated they retain their distinctive characteristics.

All cultivars have a scientific name which has the Latin botanical name followed by an epithet. The Latin botanical name is italicized and the epithet is bounded by single quotes. For example, *Camellia japonica* ‘Adolph Audusson’.

Botanist and camellia collectors have all frequently observed that a cul-



‘BELLA JINHUA’ LEAF

tivar may have blooms that are different in size, color, and condition. These variations are due to growing conditions not the cultivars’ genetics. They are not stable and are not reproduced when propagated.

Challenges and Controversy

An example that is not controversial is ‘Elegans Champagne’. This cultivar can have two forms of petals that are stable when propagated. However, the flower size, color, and anemone form are essentially the same. The one distinctive difference is in the “guard petals.” One form has flat petals, and a second form has wavy guard petals. An interesting difference with some preferring the wavy look and others liking the smooth flat look. But no way does this petal difference lead us to define them as two distinctive cultivars.

An interesting and challenging example is illustrated by *C. amplexicaulis* which is described as having a purplish red, small, single flower with a fine white edge on the thick cup shaped petals. The leaves are oblong-elliptical, very large and heavily veined. This species originated in Vietnam. There are

two recognizable forms grown in the USA.

Form A has pinkish buds that open to a small deep pink with a fine white margin. The leaves are long reaching 9 inches in length that bloom mid to late season in the USA.

Form T has a slightly smaller red flower with a red bud. The leaves are slightly smaller than form A. The plant is slightly more compact and blooms mid to late season.

The forms were imported by Nuccio's Nurseries from two different sources in Japan. Form A came from Atagawa Tropical Garden and Alligator Farm, Atagawa, Japan. Form T is from Hiroshi Terada, Oshima, Japan.

These forms remain stable when propagated at Nuccio's Nurseries. However, the characteristic differences, while noticeable, are not distinctive. Therefore, they are not treated in the *Camellia Nomenclature* as separate cultivars. Since they were imported from Japan, their origins in Vietnam are not documented. Are there other forms in Vietnam where it has been cultivated for years as an ornamental plant? To date no wild plants have been discovered. We may assume over the years that these forms resulted from different propagators or that one was a sport of the other. However, it is best to continue to consider them as the same cultivar with two forms.

Do we have a controversy with 'Bella Jinhua' and 'MonBell'? Are they two cultivars or one cultivar with two forms?

'Bella Jinhua' is sport of 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa' that was discovered and



'BELLA JINHUA'



BRONZE LEAVES IN MAY

named in China. The name means “red leafed bella.” The dark red flower is a medium formal double with black veining in the interior of the petals and lighter red on petal edges which makes a stunning and distinctive bloom.

The new foliage is a very attractive burgundy red.

Monrovia Nursery is propagating a sport of ‘Nuccio’s Bella Rossa’ as ‘Mon-Bell’ with a trademark name of “Vestitio Rosso Camellia”. The plant I received



NEW MAROON FOLIAGE

from Monrovia Nursery bloomed as a medium formal double red with black veins. It resembles the flowers of the plants at Nuccio’s labeled as ‘Bella Jinhua’. In April, new leaves were a gorgeous dark burgundy red. As the leaves mature, they turn to a bronze tone of red and by the middle of June they were green with no other marks.

Foliage on the plants observed at Nuccio’s changed from burgun-



‘ELEGANS CHAMPAGNE’

dy after several months to green with black streaks and flecks. Some also had interesting burgundy and green markings.

It has been suggested by Tom Nuccio and Don Bergamini that these are different sports. The flower and plant growth are essentially similar but there are some differences in how and when the burgundy foliage matures. The Monrovia plant has a bronze phase before turning green. No other leaf markings were observed. The Nuccio form turns more slowly from burgundy to green with many leaves having black markings. The bronze phase seen on the Monrovia plant was not observed at Nuccio’s. The Monrovia form had no black or burgundy markings on the foliage, and the flower is flatter than Nuccio’s, at least at times. Therefore, it is likely that they are different sports (genetic mutations), but are these differences enough to classify them as two distinct cultivars? At this point *the Camellia Nomenclature* treats them as the same cultivar having two forms.



'HOLY PURE' IN A BOWL

The Wonderful **MARCH** *Camellias*

BY BRADFORD KING

Spring is the time of year to clean up spent flowers, prune, repot, and fertilize camellias. This is good exercise with rewards for better blooms next season. However, it is also the time to pick the best camellia flowers to float in a bowl and make attractive home camellia displays. There are no prizes awarded, but this is great fun. The reward is enjoying their beauty and sharing them with family and friends.

There are late blooming *C. japonicas*, like ‘Ace of Hearts’, ‘Spring Formal’, and ‘Julius Nuccio’, that finally show their beautiful red colors without the help of gib.

Several nonreticulata hybrid cultivars, like ‘Lavender Swirl’, ‘Nicky Crisp’, and ‘Spring Daze’, enliven the garden with their bright colorful flowers.

But some of the most impressive flowers are the *C. reticulata* blooms.

Late winter and spring are when they naturally bloom. For example, a gibbed ‘Ruta Hagmann’ bloomed for the winter camellia shows, but it was the middle of March when she produced a dozen very large natural flowers.



‘JULIUS NUCCIO’



‘LAVENDER SWIRL’



‘RUTA HAGMANN’



‘BARBARA GOFF’

In 2021, I saw no ‘Barbara Goff’ entries in the Southern California camellia shows. Usually there are several; in fact, she won best of show in February 2019 at Descanso Gardens at the Southern California Council show. Consequently, when she bloomed in March, I took a photo on the plant and picked her to display among a table arrangement my wife created for Easter.

Bunnies are always a favorite at Easter. Since I grew up in Dedham, Massachusetts, and we raised our family there, we cherish the Dedham Pottery plates seen in the background. The Dedham Pottery Company operated during the arts and craft movement from 1896 to 1943. It is known for its high fire stoneware with a very fine crackle glaze and cobalt blue border designs that include Iris, Horse Chestnut, and the very popular Rabbit. Reproductions are sold today, but we inherited some originals from my parents and purchased others when antiquing.

Flowers at the dinner table add to the ambiance of a fine meal. A dinner table display always needs to be short enough so people can see each other as they talk and share a meal together. When ‘Holy Pure’ bloomed in March, it helped us celebrate Saint Patrick’s with a traditional boiled dinner of cabbage, potatoes, carrots, and corned beef.

During the camellia show season, I pick the best blooms during the week to refrigerate and only display those that do not make the cut in a home display. Once the shows are over, the very best make a lovely display on a kitchen counter. I understand such an arrangement does not last in a home with indoor cats. Since we are dog lovers, we have no issue with enjoying them. As they get tired, new ones replace them... an ongoing joy.

During the camellia show season, I was able to enter several gibbed and natural singles and trays of like blooms of 'Dr. Clifford Parks'. Since he kept on blooming into spring, he made an attractive exhibit in a large decorative bowl.

In astronomy, "March comes in like a Lion and goes out like a Lamb" refers to the constellations Leo (the Lion) and Aries (the Lamb) as they reposition during March. The saying evolved into the proverb meaning March is a month of cold, biting winds, like a lion devouring flesh, to the gentle warmth of spring breezes, like the soft fleece of a newborn lamb. As a gardener, I remain indoors when March is lion-like and take on the spring cleaning in the garden when like a lamb. I especially enjoy the wonderful March blooming camellias. Don't you?



**'BARBARA GOFF' WITH
DEDHAM POTTERY**



CAMELLIA DISPLAY IN MARCH



'DR. CLIFFORD PARKS'

Swa





Swarthmore College

CAMELLIA GARDEN

BY BRADFORD KING
PHOTOS BY DENNIS HART

Swarthmore College is a private liberal arts college in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, that was founded in 1864. The 425-acre Scott Arboretum makes up the college campus. The rolling hills, flowering trees, and pathways make a beautiful campus located 11 miles from Philadelphia. The Arboretum was founded in 1929 with a donation from the Scott family to be a living memorial to Arthur Hoyt Scott, the class of 1895. He was President of Scott Paper Company.

The camellia collection is located throughout the campus with a concentration on a corner of the campus. There are 47 cultivars and species for a total of 127 plants according to the website. They receive on average 44 inches of rain a year and 20 inches of snow with summer highs in the high 80s and the winter low in the mid-20s which is suitable for cold hardy camellias.

There is a fine collection of the cold hardy camellias developed by Dr. William Ackerman and Dr. Clifford Parks, both noted pioneer hybridizers of cold



‘ASHTON PINK’



‘WINTER’S SNOWMAN’

hardy camellias, as well as Longwood Gardens’ cold hardy cultivars.

After severe cold weather in the 1970s destroyed all but 15 of the 959 camellias in the National Arboretum in Maryland, Dr. William Ackerman, a research geneticist in charge of the camellia collection, began a cold hardy breeding program. In 1962, he purchased a seven and half acre farm in Ashton, Maryland, which proved to be excellent climatically for testing cold hardiness. He continued his breeding program vigorously after retiring in the early 1980s. The Ashton series is represented in the Swarthmore collection by ‘Ashton Pink’.

Two wonderful examples of Dr. Ackerman’s winter series are illustrated by ‘Winter’s Snowman’, which has a small snow-white semidouble to anem-



‘WINTER’S INTERLUDE’

Photo: Gene Phillips



‘SNOW FLURRY’

Photo: Brad King



‘JERRY HILL’



‘APRIL TRYST’ Photo: Brad King

one flower with loose petals, and the lovely pink semidouble bloom of ‘Winter’s Interlude’.

Several other of Dr. Ackerman’s introductions are also part of the collection, such as ‘Snow Flurry’, that resembles snow falling, and ‘Jerry Hill’, a rich deep pink bloom.

Dr. Clifford Parks is represented by ‘April Dawn’, ‘April Rose’, ‘April Remembered’, ‘April Melody’, and ‘April Tryst’.

Dr. Parks’ introductions also include ‘Crimson Candles’, which is a small bright rose red *C. reticulata* cross with *C. fraterna*. Parks named it for the candle-shaped buds.



‘CRIMSON CANDLES’ Photo: Brad King



'AUTUMN SPIRIT'

The deep pink small to medium peony flowers of Dr. Parks' 'Autumn Spirit' certainly look great with its abundant blooms. He also introduced a japonica seedling that blooms in the spring naming it 'Spring's Promise'.

Longwood Gardens, near Philadelphia, introductions include 'Longwood Centennial', 'Longwood Valentine', and 'Aida'.

'Korean Fire' and 'Korean Snow' introduced by Barry Yinger are also in the Swarthmore collection. He collected *C. japonica* seeds in North Korea and field tested them on his farm in Pennsylvania.

The camellia collection contains *C. sasanqua* cultivars like 'Long Island



'SPRING'S PROMISE'



'KOREAN FIRE' Photo: Mason McNair

Pink', which is an unregistered fall blooming cold hardy with a lovely pink flower. It can be found for sale on the internet and is grown by members of the Long Island Camellia Society, a small band of resolute camellia enthusiasts.

Charles Cresson, a Swarthmore camellia enthusiast, has been trialing camellia seedlings in the Scott Arboretum. One is 'Vanilla Scented Pink' which looks lovely and promises to be fragrant as well as cold hardy. We look forward to seeing it registered.

In conclusion, the Swarthmore College beautiful campus has a fine collection of cold hardy camellias registered by Drs. Ackerman and Parks as well as those developed in Pennsylvania by Barry Yinger and Longwood Gardens. Camellia enthusiasts will want to place Swarthmore College on their bucket list.



'LONG ISLAND PINK'



'VANILLA SCENTED PINK'



C. azalea x 'ROYAL VELVET' 2

Breeding Hybrids with CAMELLIA AZALEA

BY GENE PHILLIPS

I began to get interested in breeding camellias at an early age growing up in Savannah, Georgia. *C. japonicas*, *C. sasanquas*, and *C. reticulatas* were the primary species that captured my interest initially for developing new varieties. As more species became available, my interest in hybridization continued to grow. In 2000, I read an article by Professor Gao Jiyin from China about a most peculiar species discovered in his country called *C. azalea*. This species was unusual because of its unique blooming season throughout the year. In his article, Professor Gao talked about the tremendous breeding potential that *C. azalea* presented for developing hybrids with longer blooming periods during the year. Let me make a comment about the commonly used name of *C. azalea*. The correct and accepted name of this species is *C. changii*, but the name *C. azalea* is used so commonly that I will continue to refer to this species as *C. azalea* in this article.

Although this idea of breeding new hybrids with *C. azalea* was very exciting, these plants were in China and not available in America. I contacted my good friend Hulyn Smith, who was the Chairman of the ACS Research Committee, about the possibility of the American Camellia Society leading efforts to import plant material of *C. azalea*



C. azalea

into the United States. Hulyn was one of the most progressive camellia growers that I have ever known. He was always looking for new ways to improve

how we grew our camellias. Also, he was very interested in breeding camellias. He was very excited about the idea of American camellia breeders having the opportunity to develop these new longer blooming hybrids, so Hulyn spearheaded efforts by ACS to bring *C. azalea* plants to the United States.

The American Camellia Society purchased 100 rooted cuttings of *C. azalea* and imported them into America. Although this was an exciting adventure, there were many things that we



HULYN SMITH

did not know about this species that proved to be challenging initially. One thing that we discovered was that *C. azalea* does not do well on its own roots. We found that this species does much better when it is grafted onto a strong rootstock. Although it was challenging, we were able to get *C. azalea* plants grafted from the original cuttings that ACS purchased. Much of what I did in the early years was to learn about this species and discover ways to tap its potential. As Professor Gao indicated from the beginning in his article, this species is a most peculiar camellia. Although we can get blooms throughout the year, it blooms heavily for me in Georgia from May to September.

I have found that you can breed *C. azalea* by using it as a pollen parent in hybridization onto other flowers from our camellias that bloom primarily from fall through winter. We can also reverse that scenario and use pollen from winter blooming varieties to pollinate *C. azalea* during its blooming season which is late spring to early fall. Either way, we must store pollen in the refrigerator for several months.

I have bred *C. azalea* hybrids for many years now. It has been interesting to see how well the hybrids grow on their own roots unlike *C. azalea*. Most,

but not all, of the *C. azalea* hybrids that I have developed exhibit hybrid vigor and grow much better than either parent. It has taken me many years to evaluate the seedlings and determine which ones should be introduced. Just like our children, camellia seedlings are different, even ones with the exact same parentage. I have taken longer to evaluate my *C. azalea* hybrids before releasing them than maybe I should, but I want to be sure that the ones I introduce are good varieties in most gardens.

Another point that I would like to make about the *C. azalea* hybrids is that they do their very best in full sun or lots of sun. They can grow in filtered light locations, but they generally grow much better and set more blooms in sunny parts of the garden.

One of my favorite hybrids is a cross of *C. japonica* 'Wendy' x *C. azalea* which was bred by Hulyn Smith. This variety was named 'Wendzalea' and



GENE AND HIS *C. azalea* BREEDING PLANT



***C. azalea* SEED PODS**

has proven to be a good plant and great fall bloomer. Hulyn's outstanding hybrid was one of the first *C. azalea* hybrids developed in the United States and is a variety that I would recommend for anyone interested in fall bloomers.

One of my hybrids which will be released and introduced soon is a cross of *C. azalea* x *C. japonica* 'Royal Velvet'. This variety is a good, consistent grower with lots of blooms during the fall. The blooms are large single blooms with twisted petals. The color is Chinese Red which is an interesting color camellia bloom in the fall. This variety blooms for me from late August to early January. Technically, it blooms summer, autumn, and winter, but its primary blooming season is autumn.

Another of my *C. azalea* hybrids scheduled for release is a cross of *C. azalea* x *C. japonica* 'Tama Glitters'. This hybrid is a good plant and grows well on its own roots. The large red flowers often exhibit a center of petaloids with beautiful striations. It blooms for me from early September to mid-January with autumn being its primary blooming season.

I have developed a hybrid cross of *C. azalea* x *C. japonica* 'Omega' that has an especially bright coral pink bloom. It has large single flowers that



'WENDZALEA'



***C. azalea* x 'ROYAL VELVET' 1**

are very impressive blooming in mass. This hybrid blooms from August through January with autumn being its peak season. This variety will be released in several more years.

My favorite *C. azalea* hybrid that I have developed is another cross of *C. azalea* x *C. japonica* 'Royal Velvet'. This semidouble red flower has large to very large flowers on an extremely vigorous plant. I have had many blooms



***C. azalea* x 'TAMA GLITTERS'**



C. azalea x 'ROYAL VELVET' 3

open naturally that were 6-6.5 inches across. Like many of the *C. azalea* hybrids that I have seen, the flowers on this hybrid consistently exhibit petal striations which are very interesting. This variety blooms mid-August to early January with its primary blooming season being autumn. This new introduction will be released soon.

I am especially fond of another of my hybrids which is a cross of *C. azalea* x *C. japonica* 'Snowman'. I have found that many of the *C. azalea* hybrids made from crosses with white or primarily white japonicas result in coral or salmon color blooms. This hybrid is an example of that color result. The vigorous plant blooms August to early January with large single flowers that are a light salmon pink color. This new variety will be released in a few years.



C. azalea x 'SNOWMAN' 2



C. azalea x 'OMEGA' 2

CONTEMPORARY C. R

The Chinese Yunnan *C. reticulata* were imported by Descanso Gardens and Ralph Peer in 1948. Hybridizing began in earnest during the 1950s with Howard Asper, Dr. Clifford Parks, and Nuccio's Nurseries leading the way in Southern California. In Northern California, it was Frank Pursel and Jack Mandarich. In the South, it was Dr. Walter Homeyer. They are the forerunners for contemporary camellia breeders Hulyn Smith, John Wang, and Dan Charvet.

Hulyn Smith—Camellia Guru

Ellis Hulyn Smith (1929-2011), Valdosta, Georgia, was a prolific camellia hybridizer who was friends with Pursel and Mandarich. Hulyn was very active in the American Camellia Society, serving as president from 2005-2007. He was awarded The ACS Tablet of Honor in 2010 for his contributions to ACS. Hulyn introduced 49 *C. reticulata* hybrids, many of which are



'RAY GENTRY VARIEGATED'

ETICULATA HYBRIDIZERS

BY BRADFORD KING

named for friends. The list reads like the “Who’s Who” of camellia hobbyists: Chuck Ritter, Howard Rhodes, Mary Rhodes, Randolph Maphis, Ray Gentry, Richard Mims, Sherrida Crawford, and Walter Homeyer.

Hulyn was known for growing big red reticulata blooms. One of his favorites was ‘Ray Gentry’. He also loved variegated flowers and was especially proud of ‘Ray Gentry Variegated’.

One of the traditions in the camellia world is experienced growers mentoring new members. Hulyn was an inspiration and mentor to other camellia people. This is illustrated by Randolph Maphis who has reported how Ray Gentry and Hulyn Smith mentored him. Today, Randolph continues this tradition, inspiring others with his knowledge and expertise, which includes his grandchildren. When Marilyn and Randolph became good friends with Mary and Howard Rhodes, Randolph shared plants to help the Rhodes establish their camellia collection.



‘RANDOLPH MAPHIS’



VIRGINIA AND MARVIN BELCHER

Hulyn honored Marilyn and Randolph by naming camellias for them. He chose a large to very large red bloom with frosted petals for ‘Randolph Maphis’.

Growing camellias and entering shows is frequently a couple activity. In Southern California, we had Virginia and Marvin Belcher. Marvin was age 94 when they won the Lewis Cup for Best of Show in 2019 with the nonre-



LEWIS CUP WINNING BLOOM IS ‘SENRITSU-KO’



MARY AND HOWARD RHODES

ticulata hybrid 'Senritsu-Ko'. He went to camellia heaven in 2021.

In Tallahassee, Florida, Mary and Howard Rhodes illustrate this. 'Mary Rhodes' has a large to very large semidouble light pink flower that shades to white. It blooms late season on a vigorous dense spreading plant. It is a controlled cross between reticulata hybrids 'Suzanne Withers' and 'Annabelle Fetterman'. While Hulyn had a passion for large red camellias, this is a great pink hued flower. The flower photo was taken in the greenhouse of Mary and Howard Rhodes.

Dr. Walter Homeyer (1926-1998) was a well-known Macon, Georgia, physician and world class camellia hybridizer who discovered camellias in the early 1950s. The most popular of his 50 registrations is the award winning 'Frank Houser'. It is named for his friend and fellow physician.



'MARY RHODES'

In 2004, Hulyn named a very large semidouble to loose peony flower with a beautiful frosting on the red petals 'Walter Homeyer'.



**FRANK HOUSER AND
WALTER HOMEYER**



‘WALTER HOMEYER’



‘HOLY PURE’

John Wang’s Camellia Breakthroughs

Since most of the *C. reticulata* hybrids have red and pink flowers, John Wang’s goal is to breed light colored cultivars. He has used two breeding strategies to get light colored *reticulata* flowers. One is using white *C. japonica* cultivars like ‘Kona’ with the *C. reticulata* ‘Suzanne Withers’ which has a white flower with pink tones that get deeper on the petal edges. This is how he bred ‘Holy Pure’ (‘Sheng Jie’) which has a large to very large semidouble flower with pink buds that open to a creamy white tinged with pink that gets darker on the petal edges. It was awarded The Charlotte C. Knox *Reticulata* Award by the American Camellia Society in 2018.

He varied the white *japonica* strategy beyond ‘Kona’ using other combinations of light-colored *japonicas* like ‘Elaine’s Betty’, ‘Nuccio’s Jewel’, and nonreticulata hybrid ‘Honeymoon’. When a ‘Honeymoon’ x *C. nitidissima* seedling was crossed with ‘Suzanne Withers’, it produced ‘Yellow and Purple’ (‘Yiao Huang Wei Zi’). The medium flower is a formal double creamy flower with undertones of lavender/purple and touches of yellow at the base of the wavy petals.

The second strategy John uses is to reduce the *C. reticulata* to 25%, which he reasoned would increase the odds of generating a lighter colored bloom, because color is controlled by the genes. That is, by reducing the dominance of the red genetic loading, there is a greater probability of getting light colored flowers. This is illustrated by ‘Eighteen-Year-Old Maiden’ which has a large white flower with patches of pink and red on the outer petals.

Several of John Wang’s *C. reticulata* hybrids are propagated in China. This is illustrated by ‘Baojun Xiaofeng,’ named for a technical director of Kunming Camellia Research Center. Its nickname is “Red Heart” because of the central red anthers which are circled by white to creamy petals. *C. reticulata* white flowers are rare.

John Wang has some breeding practices that have helped him become a successful hybridizer. They are as follows:

1. Pollination is done indoors where there is no interference from rain, wind, bees, and temperature changes. Three days after the last flower is pollinated, they are moved outdoors.
2. Cross pollination is done only with highly selected parents that have one or more characteristics matching the breeding goal.



‘YELLOW AND PURPLE’



‘EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD MAIDEN’



“RED HEART” *Randolph Maphis*

Multiple identical crosses are made to ensure that there are many seeds of the same cross.

3. All seeds are germinated. He selects the best of these seedlings, that match his hybridizing goal, to propagate.

Dan Charvet Breeds for Landscape Beauty

Dan resides in Fort Bragg, California, where the climate is too cold for most japonica cultivars to set seed. Therefore, Dan has specialized in breeding with *C. reticulata* and other camellia species, especially those with fragrance. He found that *C. fraterna* and *C. pitardii* Var. *yunnanica* and *C. grijsii* cross well with *C. reticulata* producing fertile fragrant seedlings with complex beautiful flower forms. Dan had over 50 years as a camellia breeder and owner of Heartwood Nursery before he retired and closed the nursery. While some of his introductions are show camellias, he was focused more on developing beautiful landscape camellias that shed in one piece and require less water to thrive and bloom in the garden. He has registered 25 *C. reticulata* hybrids. These include 'Bloomfield', 'Bloomfield Variegated', 'Braxton Bragg', 'City of Newberg', 'Heartwood Bolero', 'Heartwood Fandango', and 'Shelter Cove'. The large to very large velvet red 'Bloomfield' that Dan introduced in 1985 is one of his earliest registered camellias. When this bloom is fully variegated, it has a striking flower.

The city of Newberg, near Portland, Oregon, has a tradition of deco-



'BLOOMFIELD'



'BLOOMFIELD VARIEGATED'

rating the downtown with camellias. They asked Dan to name one of his cultivars ‘City of Newberg’ when the state legislature named Newberg the “Camellia City of Oregon.” The city purchased many of this cultivar which are planted on a local golf course. They continue to propagate this cultivar to provide plants to Newberg residents. ‘The City of Newberg’ has a very large semidouble pink flower that shades lighter on the petal edges. It is a vigorous upright bushy plant with multiple camellia species in addition to *C. reticulata* ‘Purple Gown’ in its genetics. Dan is famous for using multiple species in his introductions to make them resistant to petal blight.

One of his most popular introductions is ‘Shelter Cove’, a great name for a camellia. The large rose form double *C. reticulata* hybrid has a bright medium pink flower with warm undertones which make a beautiful bloom.

Camellia hybridizing continues today with many being named for loved ones. Howard and Mary named a medium to large deep pink ‘Frank Houser’ seedling for their daughter Adrienne Boueres.

Doug Simon named a very large red *reticulata* seedling ‘Miss Sally’ for his wife.



‘CITY OF NEWBERG’



‘SHELTER COVE’



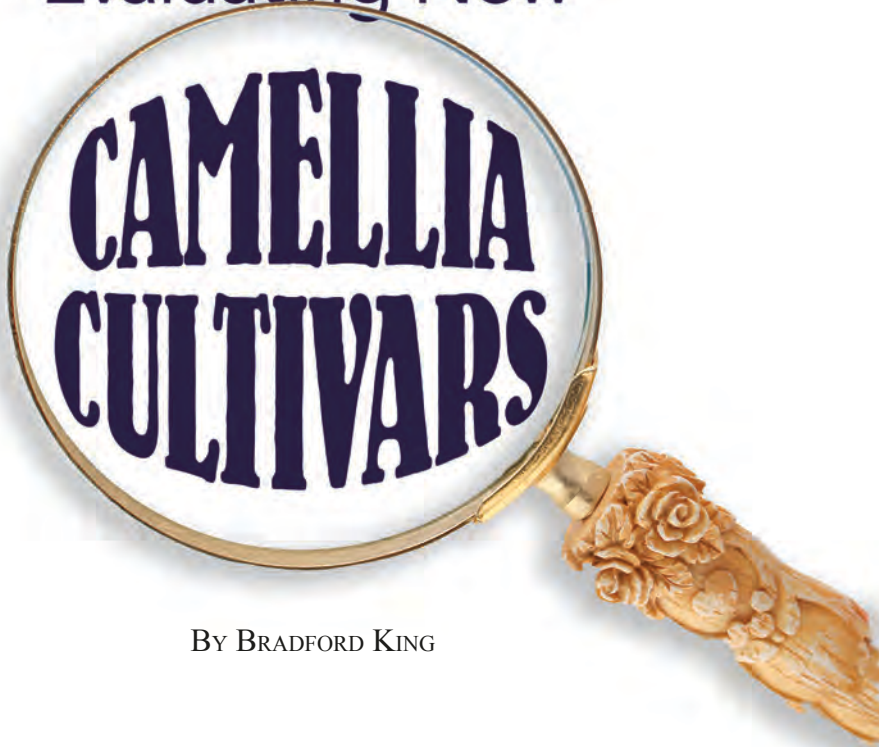
‘MISS SALLY’



‘ANTIQUE ROSE’

American Camellia Yearbook 2022

Evaluating New



BY BRADFORD KING

It is absolutely necessary to have at least three years and better to observe a new seedling for five years to determine its merits before it can be registered by the American Camellia Society (ACS). This may be hard on a hobbyist who is enthusiastic about the new flowers on a seedling. However, it is necessary to observe the seedling in different climates and to determine its “true” blooming season, including its form(s) and growth habit.

Julius Nuccio articulated criteria for evaluating new camellia seedlings. They ring as true today as when he wrote them in *The Camellia* published in 1978 by ACS and edited by David Feather. This classic camellia book is out of print.

Performance

Does the seedling bloom well every year without bud drop or bullnosing. A cultivar that opens all blooms is a top performer. This is illustrated by ‘Antique Rose’ showing a mass of buds open and without bullnosing. It is a Nuccio’s nonreticulata introduced in 2023.



‘KALEIDOSCOPE’ AND A RED SPORT

Distinction

To be judged distinctive it would exhibit new characteristics, specifically one or more of the following—color, size, form, bloom season, growth habit, or foliage.

Flower color is the most prominent characteristic for most people when adding a camellia to the garden. There are 600 red camellia japonicas in the ACS Encyclopedia and more in the *Camellia Nomenclature*. It is why ACS asks what makes this seedling worth registering. “It’s my baby so I love it.” This is what all parents feel about their children which makes them good parents. But while a true feeling about a camellia, it is not enough to justify adding to the hundreds propagated for sale. Sorry!

The last two years I have found a small pretty red flower on ‘Kaleidoscope’ and an interesting very large red flower with genetic white marking on ‘Circus’. Since they are not my baby seedlings, I am more objective and can say with certainty they are not worthy of introduction.



‘CIRCUS’ AND A RED SPORT

Why did Nuccio’s Nurseries introduce the red camellias discussed below? What made them distinctive and worth registering?

‘Ace O’ Hearts’ has a medium to large semidouble to rose form double flower and was not scheduled to be introduced as it looks like many other red camellias. A friend grew a group of them in full sun to landscape his home. Therefore, since it will tolerate more sun than other red japonicas, they registered it.

What about ‘Grand Prix’? It is distinctive in that is a very large flower with textured petals that sets buds that bloom and doesn’t bullnose. I can attest to these qualities as this red semidouble has been blooming at my home for over 25 years.

There are 113 *C. japonica* red formal doubles in the ACS Camellia Encyclopedia so what makes ‘Spring Fling’ distinctive? The medium flower blooms in the late season which makes it distinctive and grown to extend the blooming season into spring.

New yellow, blue, and coral blooms are still needed. To date we have



‘ACE O’ HEARTS’



‘CORAL DELIGHT’

some good light yellow cultivars but no gold or true blue camellias. I love the coral flowers produced like ‘Coral Delight’ and the lavender pink of ‘Taylors’ Perfection’. However, new coral and lavender cultivars that bloom freely and don’t bullnose would be welcomed.

Large formal double nonreticulata hybrids are still needed. One of the best is ‘Cile Mitchell’. The pink rose form double to formal double is beautiful but what makes it distinctive is its large size when it retains a formal double bloom.



‘TAYLOR’S PERFECTION’



‘GRAND PRIX’

Propagation

Julius Nuccio elaborated on the Nurseries’ process of evaluation and propagation. Namely it takes three to five years to properly evaluate a cultivar and another five years of propagating before a new cultivar is marketed. In addition, they required there should be at least 10 plants before putting them on the market. Today Nuccio’s propagates 30 to 40 plants before listing them in the catalog for sale.

The Higo Camellia Society was founded in Kumanoto, Japan, in 1958. Five members of the Higo Society Registration Committee observes the plant for five years to ensure that the flower pattern is stable. There must be at least 100 plants for sale at the time of registration.

The camellia hobbyist has a problem. An amateur grower like myself is not able to propagate 100 plants. For example, we are very unlikely to have 100 rootstock, and if purchased, the cost of 100 rootstock from a nursery would be about a thousand dollars. ACS has not declared that there be any number of seedlings propagated, but two or three is too limited. What should be done? I recommend that at least two of the original seedlings be



‘CILE MITCHELL’

grafted once they bloom and look promising. John Wang grafts most of his seedlings before they bloom to provide insurance for loss.

After a camellia is registered, what is required by ACS? Nothing! However, when there are only two or three in the world, it will only be enjoyed by the hybridizer and a friend or family member.

I recommend that at least 10 be propagated after a seedling has been registered. They will make great gifts or raffle plants at camellia society meetings. I accept donations to the Southern California Camellia Society for new cultivars, and scions are provided free.

A great alternative is to get a nursery to propagate your registered seedling. Nuccio's is propagating only one of my four introductions, so I have plenty of grafting to do.



‘BEV PIET’S SMILE’

Return to TOC

Virology and Camellias

BY BRADFORD KING

The COVID pandemic alerted all of us to viruses and the science of virology. We know the common cold, the flu, and COVID 19 are all diseases caused by viruses that mutate. The science of virology began in 1892 when Dmitri Ivanovsky discovered that sap from a diseased tobacco plant, even after it was filtered, remained infectious. Beijernck called the infected substance a “Virus.” What we know and don’t know about “the Camellia Virus” is highlighted in this article and “Camellia Viruses” by Randolph Maphis.

‘Cornelian’ (‘Domino’) is the virus variegation form of ‘Lion Head’ (‘Shizitou’) that was produced in China hundreds of years before the science of virology. Therefore, it was mistakenly believed that ‘Cornelian’ was a



‘CORNELIAN’

genetic mutation. Today we know it is not a genetic mutation but the result of a virus. We don’t have written documentation when or how viruses first infected camellias. However, we assume it began in Asia and may have been transmitted by a leaf eating insect foraging among camellia plants. The Yunnan Botanical Institute has reported that ‘Domino’, and a few other cultivars, resulted from “bud mutation”—a scion of ‘Lion Head’ was grafted onto a virus infected plant, which was how it became infected. An unintended consequence of grafting.

We know the “camellia virus” (white markings on the petals and yellow markings on leaves) was also present in Japan. ‘Daikagura’, known as ‘Masayoshi’ in Japan, is a virus variegated red flower that was imported to Europe in 1832 by Dr. Philip Franz von Siebolt. It too was thought to be a genetic cultivar. The red camellia was called ‘Daikagura Red’ and believed to be a sport of ‘Daikagura’. This is more likely an error due to lack of knowledge of virology. The red came first and became infected most likely by chance. We continued this erroneous thinking in the *Camellia Nomenclature* first published in 1946.

The International Camellia Registry described an 1859 ‘Daikagura’ as a red semidouble originated in Japan that became extinct. This may have been

the original plant that was variegated by chance producing the cultivar we know as ‘Daikagura’—the red flower with white markings. The cultivar we describe as ‘Daikagura Red’ was registered by Chuga in 1936 and described as a sport of ‘Daikagura’. This most likely was a flower on a stem unaffected by the virus that when propagated, continued to have a virus free red flower which is not a genetic mutation. But who can know for sure?

It was not until 1946 that Millbrath and McWhorter successfully transmitted leaf variegation to solid green leaves and seedlings by grafting, which established that the virus can be transmitted in camellias. In 1950, Plakidas began a series of experiments that found that the virus was transmissible to flowers as well as foliage by grafting. It was also discovered that using virus rootstock transmitted the virus to an attached scion. Camellia hobbyists and nurseries used this information to intentionally infect camellias to develop “new” cultivars.

Over the last 50 years, virus variegated cultivars have become very popular. Generally, the disease caused by this virus has limited negative effects on flower growth size and form. Virus variegation may still occur by chance but today is widely done purposely. It is believed that there are several camellia viruses most likely due to mutations. However, scientific investi-

‘DAIKAGURA’ RED AND VARIEGATED



gations have yet to confirm what most camellia growers believe to be true, there are at least three viruses and as many as eight.

Interestingly, there are a few variegated camellias that have been registered which have no known plants without the virus. This is illustrated by ‘Bev Piet’s Smile’ which has a medium loose peony virus variegated flower. It was bred by Piet and Gaeta who gave Konrad Hooper plant material which he propagated and registered for them. I am unaware of any documentation of by whom or when it was variegated. When I explored Meyer Piet’s growing area in Arcadia after he died and before his wife Bev sold the property, there were no plants of ‘Bev Piet’s Smile’ or a plant resembling this flower lacking variegation. I visited four times taking photos of all the seedlings, registered and unregistered.

I have been told this is also true for the beautiful award winning ‘Magic City’ which has a medium fire red peony flower heavily streaked by white markings.



‘MAGIC CITY’ Photo by Randolph Maphis



CHINA



‘CONFUCIUS’

[Return to TOC](#)

Camellias FROM FAR AWAY PLACES

BY BRADFORD KING

Camellias originally came from places very far away from America. Eighty percent of the 280 camellia species come from China. The most important worldwide is the tea plant (*C. sinensis*). *Sinensis* is an old term for China. The most popular species for the garden is *C. japonica* which refers to Japan. It was listed by Linnaeus to describe the genera *Camellia* and *Thea* in 1735 for the Genus *Camellia*. Today, popular camellia cultivars also come from Australia, Japan, Vietnam, New Zealand, Great Britain, and France.

CHINA

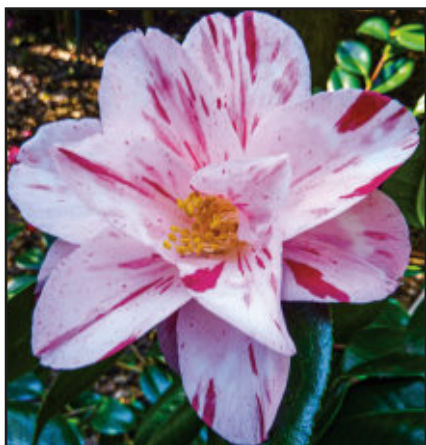
There are three important camellia species that originate in China that have been widely distributed in America. First, *C. sinensis*, the tea plant, has been cultivated for hundreds of years in China. In fact, it was being used as a medicinal plant as early as 1000 B.C. Second, *C. nitidissima* was first



‘PURPLE GOWN’



‘CORNELIAN’



‘HARU-NO-UTENA’

described as a new species in 1965. It now is widely distributed for its beautiful yellow blooms which have been used to breed several yellow hybrids. Third, the importation of the Yunnan *C. reticulata* from China to Descanso Gardens in 1948 introduced these very beautiful large flowers to the western world. Hybridization with them has produced over 800 new hybrids. These first *C. reticulata* camellias imported to America had large to very large colorful semidouble to peony flowers with upright petals and central yellow stamens.

Some of them even had formal double flowers such as ‘Purple Gown’.

There are ancient camellia trees in Yunnan, China, which is illustrated by ‘Shizitou’ which we know as ‘Lion Head’. It is one of the most common of these very old cultivars. Two trees in a nunnery in the village of Guanzhang have been estimated to be 600 years old by Chinese scientists.

When ‘Lion Head’ was variegated, it was named ‘Damanao’ by the Chinese and ‘Cornelian’ in the west. It means that viral variegation began in Asia and has been around for hundreds of years.

JAPAN

Many camellias were imported from



JAPAN

Japan to America by nurseries and Japanese Americans.

Some of the earliest arrived in Sacramento, California, in 1875. Good examples are ‘Usu-Otome’, which we know as ‘Pink Perfection’, and ‘Hikau-Genji’, known today as ‘Herme’. Other early imports from Japan kept their Japanese names such as ‘Haru-No-Utena’.

Star Nursery brought many Japanese camellias to Los Angeles in the 1930s. One that has remained popular is ‘Bokuhan’, more familiarly called ‘Tinsie’ for its miniature size. It is widely distributed because of its red anemone flower with a fountain of white central petaloids.

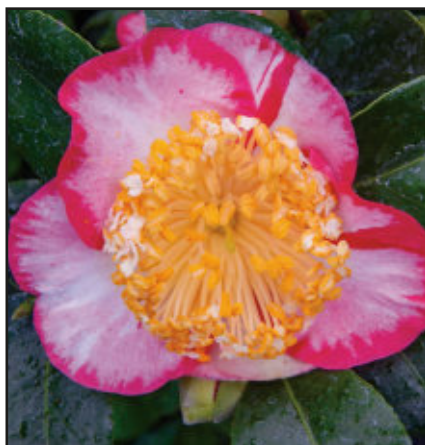
The Higo camellia was first described by a Japanese gardener in 1829. Priests and the Samurais did the original propagation. The Samurais are the



‘TINSIE’



‘YAMATO-NISHIKI’



‘OHKAN’

noblemen warriors of old Japan who devoted themselves to the arts, gardening, and scholarly activities. They grew camellias to please the Emperor and their masters. Devotion to these masters and respect for parents and ancestors was their moral code. This code was instrumental in creating an interesting custom of planting a deceased relative's favorite camellia in the family cemetery. In this way, Higo camellias left the palaces and temples, becoming more widespread in the Kumamoto region of Japan. In 1958, the Higo Camellia Society was founded in Kumamoto, Japan, to propagate and preserve the Higo camellia. They list 120 cultivars that meet their standards with many of them developed recently.

The Higo camellia is a strain of *C. japonica* with some *C. rusticana* in its background. A Higo is distinguished by their 100 to 250 stamens that flare out to form a central sunburst. The classic bloom is an asymmetrical single with 5 to 9 large petals and a dense center of beautiful long stamens. The Japanese Higo aesthetic principles are called “go ben senkaku.” A classic Higo has five (“go”) petals, arranged on a flat plane (“ben”) with three main petals creating a triangle (“senkaku”). A few examples of the Higo camellias illustrate these principles.

‘Yamato-Nishiki’ is a first-class white flower with pink and red variegation. It mutated ‘Ohkan,’ a wonderful white sport with a lovely rose red border and a mass of golden stamens.

A large dark red flower with flared stamens usually capped in white and pink petaloids is known as ‘Kumagai.’ It is a popular Higo seen in American gardens.

Higo camellias do well in the garden but are traditionally grown in Japan as a bonsai. In America, Higos are occasionally entered into camellia shows



‘KUMAGAI’



‘SATSUMA KURENAI’

where they have difficulty competing with more complicated symmetrical japonica blooms. Therefore, the Southern California Camellia Council has a Higo class which allows these flowers to be appreciated for themselves.

Many American nurseries developed good relationships with Japanese nurseries so that new Japanese varieties were seen in the U.S. For example, Nuccio's imported ‘Tama no ura’ in 1978 and introduced it to America. More recently they imported ‘Satsuma Kurenai’ which has a medium to large rose form brilliant orange red flower borne on a vigorous, upright rather colum-



HIGO DISPLAY TABLE



C. lutchuensis



C. amplexicaulis

nar plant. It blooms mid to late season. When American nurseries import and propagate new cultivars, it assists in their distribution.

The western world has Japan to thank for *C. sasanqua*, that bloom in the fall and thrive in full sun making outstanding landscape plants, and for *C. lutchuensis* which is used extensively in breeding fragrant camellias. It has profuse small buds with a touch of red on each that opens to a little sweet-smelling flower.

VIETNAM

Camellia hybridization is not a priority in Vietnam even though it is home to 20 percent of the known camellia species. The most well-known and widely grown camellia from Vietnam is *C. amplexicaulis*. It is a popular ornamental flower found in Vietnamese flower markets. The cup shaped flower is pink to purple red with thick petals finely lined in white. The large foliage is veined.





AUSTRALIA

A number of the camellia cultivars originating in Australia are widely grown and appreciated in America. The most popular *C. japonica* from Australia is 'Margaret Davis'. It is the beautiful sport of another well-known Australian cultivar, 'Aspasia MacArthur'. 'Margaret Davis' is a creamy white peony form flower with dashes of rose red and petals edged in bright vermillion. It is a medium flower that blooms in midseason on a bushy upright plant. It was introduced in 1961 by Mr. Davis who named it for his wife. Margaret was the founding President of the Garden Clubs of Australia and wrote gardening books until age 90. This camellia has been distributed throughout the camellia world and is a popular and successful show winner here in the U.S. For



'MARGARET DAVIS'



'E.G. WATERHOUSE VARIEGATED'



‘JOHN HUNT’



‘PHYLLIS HUNT’

example, the Australian Camellia Research Society Trophy has been awarded to ‘Margaret Davis’ fifteen times in the last 27 years as the best bloom of Australian origin at the American Camellia Society annual meeting show.

Two fantastic *C. reticulata* hybrids that came from Australia to America were bred by John Alexander Hunt (1936-2015). He named his first introduction, a very large pink semidouble to loose peony flower with veined petals, ‘John Hunt’. He wanted to name it for his wife Phyllis, but she wanted a smaller bloom. In 1994, he introduced ‘Phyllis Hunt’, which is still a very large flower, for their 50th anniversary. It is a peony formed deep pink flower with the petal edges shading to lighter pink and a white center and grows slowly in an open spreading manner. It has a very beautiful flower with 30 or more petals in tones of pink and white.



‘ADORABLE’



‘ELEGANT BEAUTY’

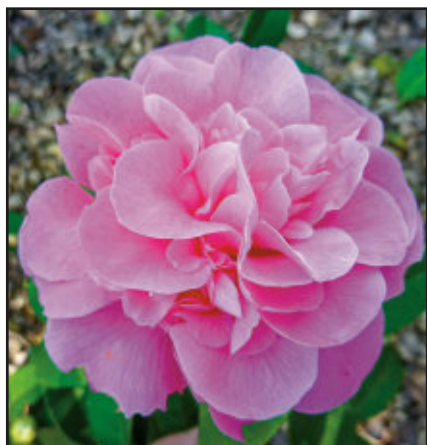
We are fortunate to have lovely nonreticulata hybrids bred in Australia that are popular in America. One of the first to make it across the Pacific was 'E.G. Waterhouse'. Professor Eben Gowrie Waterhouse bred a number of cultivars. The most well-known is this light pink formal double which bears his name. It was one of the very first formal double hybrids. 'E. G. Waterhouse Variegated' is perhaps even more popular, as the soft pink with white markings make a lovely flower.

Another beautiful formal double hybrid we see is 'Adorable'. The bright pink *C. pitardii* seedling bred by Sebire certainly lives up to its name. When visiting Nuccio's Nurseries in Altadena, California, with my wife Lynn, the first thing she said when seeing it in bloom was, "What an adorable flower." It is a show winner as a small flower.

NEW ZEALAND

It may be difficult for us in America to remember which one of the New Zealand Jurys bred and introduced which camellias over the last 50 years. We are most familiar with Les Jury who released many of his camellias internationally. Les was responsible for 'Elegant Beauty', 'Jury's Yellow', 'Debbie', 'Elsie Jury', 'Mona Jury', and his last cultivar, the lovely red 'Les Jury' named for himself. We enjoy all of these cultivars in America. Les Jury was breeding for large, self-grooming flowers that grew well while seeking to extend the flower color range in camellias. He introduced 'Anticipation' which was one of the first red nonreticulata hybrids, thus extending the color range in hy-





‘DEBBIE’



‘ANTICIPATION VARIEGATED’

brid camellias. ‘Anticipation’ and ‘Anticipation Variegated’ are widely grown in America. Les Jury was an early breeder of *C. williamsaii* hybrid camellias who introduced ‘South Seas’, another color breakthrough with its white flower toned pink with hues becoming paler and less distinct with age.

Flex Jury was his younger brother who focused on breeding formal double hybrids like ‘Dream Boat’ and ‘Water Lily’, both popular in America. Mark Jury concentrated on breeding miniature blooms suited to modern smaller gardens, most of which have not been imported to America. He is Felix’s son and lives with his wife Abbie on the original Jury property, owned by the family since the 1870s. This is where Felix and his wife Mimosa built their house and garden during the 1950s. It has one of the best private plant collections in New Zealand.



‘SOUTH SEAS’



‘WATER LILY’



‘ITTY BITTY’



‘HIGH FRAGRANCE’

While we do not see any of the wonderful cultivars Mark introduced, thanks to the internet and the New Zealand Camellia Bulletin, we can see photos of ‘Moon Moth’, ‘Peach Cascade’, ‘Apple Blossom Sun’, ‘Cream Puff’, ‘Gay Buttons’, ‘Itty Bitty’, and ‘Jury’s Pearl’. We are so closely tied with the internet, yet widely separated, in being able to grow each other’s new camellia cultivars.

James Finley’s fragrant camellia breeding program goal was to develop lovely scented camellias on a good plant that produced beautiful flowers. He took pollen from a large pink loose peony *C. japonica* ‘Tiffany’ flower and placed it on an emasculated miniature white single flower bud from the sweet, scented *C. lutchuensis*. This controlled cross resulted in a seedling that produced a fragrant small semidouble white flower with pink flush on the back of its petals. He named it ‘Scentuous’. The fragrance clearly was inherited from the seed parent and the increased size and pink petal flush from the pollen parent. This plant became a camellia bridge in his breeding program to produce larger and more complicated fragrant camellia cultivars. A bridge camellia must be fertile and have inherited the desired traits. Finley introduced at least 30 fragrant camellias as a result of this breeding program. The most popular fragrant camellia in America is his ‘High Fragrance’. The very beautiful medium pale ivory pink peony flower with deeper pink on the petal edges has a very pleasing scent. It is a product of his bridge camellia ‘Scentuous’. In this case, it was used as the pollen parent.

J. Taylor of Alton introduced ‘Taylor Maid’ and ‘Taylor Supreme’ which we don’t often see in America. We grow the beautiful light pink very large semi-



‘GRACE CAPLE’



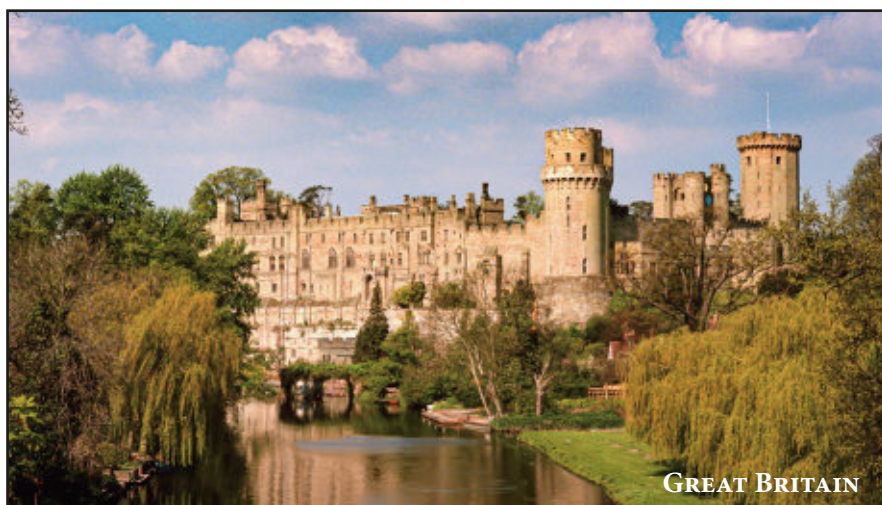
‘NICKY CRISP’

double ‘Taylor’s Perfection’. It is a frequent camellia show winner in the nonreticulata hybrid classes. The large light lavender pink flower, borne on a vigorous plant, makes it popular in the garden, as a show flower, and as an espalier.

Colonel Tom Durrant and his wife Bettie were responsible for importing the Yunnan Camellias to New Zealand. Their daughter Dr. Jane Crisp is also



‘NIGHT RIDER’



a camellia hybridizer. Mrs. Bettie Durrant is credited with introducing one of the most beautiful hybrid camellias, ‘Nicky Crisp’, in 1979. She named this semidouble fresh-looking pink flower, with distinct deep petal notches, for her grandson. ‘Nicky Crisp’ is a favorite here, as the flower retains its bright colors, producing many identical medium to large flowers. It is generally a mid to late season bloomer which helps extend the camellia season. The slow bushy growth makes it a good candidate in the garden foreground or under windows. The other Durrant hybrid we see in America is ‘Grace Caple’. The large semidouble to loose peony blush pink flower fades to white. It blooms late season helping gardeners extend the camellia season.

Oz Blumhardt is best known in America for breeding dark red camellias. He bred ‘Black Opal’, ‘Ruby Bells’, and ‘Night Rider’ using pollen from ‘Kuro-Tsukaki’, the black camellia. ‘Night Rider’ is the one widely grown in America. We appreciate the small very dark semidouble flower, maroon spring foliage, and even the red roots.

GREAT BRITAIN

The English “Williamsii hybrids” have become popular in America. A good example, and one of the most widely distributed of these hybrids bred in England, is ‘Donation’. Col. Stephenson Clarke of Sussex, England, introduced it in 1941. Clarke received plant material from John Charles Williams, the pioneer English propagator of hybrid camellias. The donated seeds from Williams may have inspired the name.



‘DONATION’



‘ELEGANS’

There are also a number of wonderful *C. japonica* cultivars that originate in England. Perhaps the most famous is ‘Elegans’, introduced in 1831 by Chandler. It is known for its beautiful large anemone formed rose pink flower that has mutated frequently.

FRANCE

In 1806, the mayor of Nantes, Ferdinand Favre, discovered that camellias could thrive outdoors in Brittany which opened the door to importing and breeding camellias. Nantes is famous for producing *C. japonica* cultivars



FRANCE



‘VILLE DE NANTES’

such as ‘Gloire de Nantes’ which was registered in 1885 by Henri Guichard. It received an RHS “Award of Merit” in 1956 for its beautiful semidouble medium rose pink bloom. The Guichard Nursery was famous during his lifetime and was continued after his death in 1911 by his daughters. The iconic French camellia is ‘Ville de Nantes’ which is popular throughout the camellia world. In Brittany, the dark red petals are highly serrated with striking white markings.

CONCLUSION

Today, it has become difficult to import plants between countries due to the necessary agricultural restrictions in place to inhibit disease and insects from also being transported. It is possible for seeds to be traded, which is acceptable for reproducing camellia species that usually don’t produce a different cultivar. Seeds from plants other than species will produce a different variety, which doesn’t allow new cultivars to be introduced in this manner. Scions legally cleared by a country’s agricultural department are still allowed. However, these agriculture regulations have slowed the exchange of new camellia cultivars between countries and also added to the difficulty of replacing lost and missing heritage camellias.



‘OTOME-TSUBAKI’ IS CAMELLIA MAIDEN

Japanese Camellias

With Wonderful Names

BY BRADFORD KING

Many of the Japanese camellias have picturesque names. We are curious and interested to know what the names mean when translated into English. This includes many of the *C. sasanqua* cultivars, all the official Higo camellias, as well as other *C. japonica* cultivars introduced to America from Japan. *The Camellias of Japan* describes 1,299 cultivars, which is about half of the Japanese camellias. This article highlights some of the most interesting Japanese camellia names.

CAMELLIA SASANQUA SPECTRUM

These camellias typically bloom in the fall and are sun tolerant. They include *C. sasanqua*, *C. hiemalis*, and *C. vernalis* cultivars. They have been cultivated for hundreds of years in Japan where many originate.

The lovely single white ‘Ginryu’ (Silver Dragon) is known as ‘Dawn’ in America. This illustrates a common practice of English speakers renaming a Japanese cultivar for marketing. Yes, the white bloom with some light pink tones on the back of the petals looks like a morning dawn, but isn’t silver dragon a more enchanting name? The dragon is a large winged horned four-legged fire breathing mythical creature that is popular in folk lore and fantasy literature. They appear in *The Hobbit* by J. R. R. Tolkien and *Harry Potter* by J. K. Rowling.



‘GINRYU’ IS SILVER DRAGON

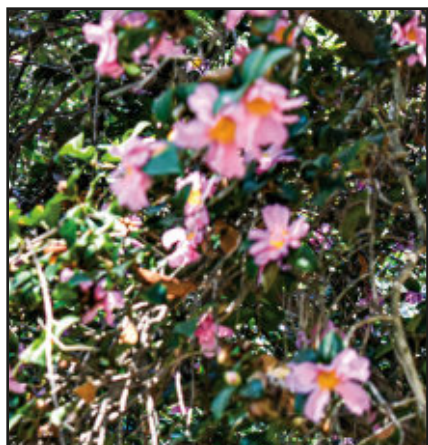


‘HIRYU’ IS FLYING DRAGON

The Japanese associate dragons with rainfall which controls the harvest and is why they are symbolic of wealth, prosperity, and luck. ‘Hiryu’ (Flying Dragon) has a small red flower which has also been called Red Bird in America.

It is common for camellia names to be named after other flowers when their colors are similar. A good example is ‘Momozono’ (Peach Garden). When the bush is in bloom, it resembles a peach garden with the numerous single pink flowers.

One of the most popular sun camellias is ‘Shishi-Gashira’ (Lion’s Head) because of its abundant red flowers with petals surrounding the stamens



‘MOMOZONO’ IS PEACH GARDEN



‘SHISHI-GASHIRA’ IS LION’S HEAD

like a lion's mane. This cultivar has a long history with written documentation dated back to 1894, but there are reports of even older trees in Japan. It is widely grown in America in public and private gardens. For example, it was planted at my home in Southern California by the previous owner and has reliably bloomed for more than 35 years.

'Setsugekka' (Snow, Moon and Flowers) has a pale pink bud and a large white semidouble flower with ruffled petals which has led to some calling it 'Fluted White'. We recommend sticking with the priority names.

People are interested in the way sunlight changes at different times of the day. The deep red hues associated with evening sunlight inspired the name 'Sekiyo' (Evening Sunlight) for a large vivid deep red semidouble flower which may lie flat or be cup shaped.

THE CLASSICS

Some of the most popular Japanese camellias grown in America had their names changed when they were marketed in the U.S. One of the most popular and widely known is 'Pink Perfection' which was imported to Sacramento, California, and released by Sacramento Nursery in 1875. In Japan, it was known as 'Otome-tsubaki' (Camellia Maiden). The flower is a small perfectly formed pink formal double just like a young lady.

Another example of a name being changed when it came to America is 'Hagoromo' (Robe of Feathers). Today we know it as 'Magnoliaeflora' because it resembles a magnolia and has abundant flowers. It was exported by



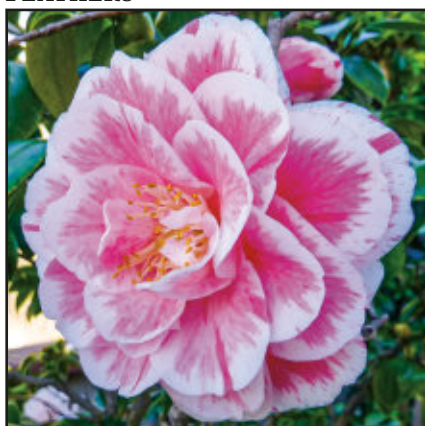
**'SETSUGEKKA' IS SNOW, MOON
AND FLOWERS**



**'SEKIYO' IS
EVENING SUNLIGHT**



'HAGOROMO' IS ROBE OF FEATHERS



'HIKARU-GENJI' IS THE HERO IN THE STORY OF GENJI



'HARU-NO-UTENA' IS SPRING SONG

Yokohama Nursery in 1879.

'Herme' is also called 'Jordan's Pride' in America, but its original name is 'Hikaru-Genji' (Hero of Genji Story) exported by Yokohama Nursery in 1879. The story describes Genji as a genius who is a very handsome member of nobility demoted from royalty. He was given the name Hikaru as a nickname which means "shining" based on his good looks. He is a fictitious character most likely based on several historical figures. The flower is a pink medium semidouble with an irregular white border.

Many of the Japanese cultivar's names were retained. A few of the varieties that have been in America for years are 'Haru-no-utena', 'Hishi-Karaito', 'Kuro-tsubaki', and 'Miya-ko-dori'.

When 'Haru-no-utena' (Spring Song) left Japan is not documented, but it is well known in the camellia states for its medium tubular semi-double white flower spotted and striped in red and pink. At times, the flower is a pale pink rather than white. It is as pretty as a spring song when fresh with perky upright petals.

'Hishi-Karaito' (Rhombic Chinese silk threads) has a small semi-double lovely pink flower with a fountain of white petaloids and stamens in the center. A rhombus is the shape of the diamond suit in play-

ing cards. The flower was first distributed in 1934 by Kobe's Chuagi Nursery. However, it dates back in Japanese camellia literature to 1844.

The 'Kuro-tsubaki' (Black camellia) name is defined by its black, red color. Dr. William Ackerman conducted cytological examination of 'Kuro-tsubaki' and discovered that it had an abnormally long chromosome which is responsible for its dark red flower and the red tones of its stems and roots. These genetic characteristics were passed on to its seedlings 'Black Opal' and 'Night Rider'.

'Miyako-dori' (Seagull) has a medium to large white semidouble flower with petals that are narrow and stand up like the wings of a seagull. It was exported first in 1891 by Yokahama Nursery.

HIGO CAMELLIAS

A Higo is a type of *C. japonica* that has a flat single flower with a mass of central stamens. There are many different bright colored Higo cultivars, some with picturesque names. This is illustrated by 'Kyo-nishiki' (Brocade of Kyoto). It has a lovely white flower with streaks and spots of pink. In Japanese, "Kyo" means Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan, which is famous for gorgeous brocade fabrics.

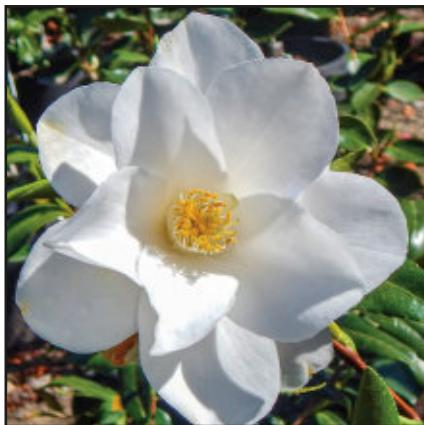
'Gosho-zakura' (Imperial Palace



**'HISHI-KARAITO' IS RHOMBIC
CHINESE SILK THREADS**



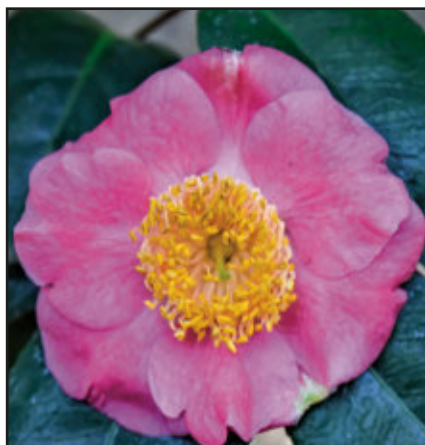
**'KURO-TSUBAKI' IS THE
BLACK CAMELLIA**



'MIYAKO-DORI' IS SEAGULL



**‘KYO-NISHIKI’ IS BROCADE
OF KYOTO**



**‘GOSHO-ZAKURA’ IS IMPERIAL
PALACE CHERRY**

Cherry) has a flower that is a lovely shade of light cherry pink. It has a medium circular single bloom with pale yellow stamens. The petals may fade to white at their base and softly fold back as the bloom ages. There are 120 to 130 pale yellow stamens arranged in a ring. Most Higo flowers are single, flat, irregular, and roughly triangular shaped. ‘Gosho-zakura’ is one that is an exception as the single flower is round and not flat with a mass of yellow circular stamens. It dates back almost two centuries in Japan but was not officially registered until 1912. In English, we frequently hyphenate the words for ease of reading and pronunciation to ‘Gosho-zakura’.

‘Miyako-no-haru’ (Spring comes to town) is an early blooming Higo,



**‘MIYAKO-NO-HARU’ IS
SPRING COMES TO TOWN**



**‘MIKUNI-NO-HOMARE’ IS
NATION’S PRIDE**



‘ASAGAO’ IS MORNING GLORY



‘OSARAKU’ IS PLEASURE OF LONG LIFE

usually the first bonsai to bloom in February. It has a medium to large pink bloom with less than 100 stamens. It grows vigorously and upright with small oval leaves. The green pistil is taller than the 70 to 90 stamens. Since it blooms early and has a lovely pink flower, it is a sign that spring is on the horizon.

‘Mikuni-no-homare’ (Nation’s Pride) has a beautiful medium veined pink flower with a fine white border and occasional red stripes. There are seven undulating petals and 150 to 190 golden stamens arranged like the spokes of a wheel in the classic Higo style. The leaves are dark green, elliptical, and wavy. It was officially recognized in 1961 and can be grown as a bonsai or looks good in the garden.



‘YAMATO-NISHIKI’ IS BROCADE OF JAPAN



‘TANCHO’ IS MANCHURIAN CRANE



‘OHKAN’ IS KING’S CROWN

There are several pale pink or blush Higos with interesting names. ‘Asagao’ (Morning Glory) is an old variety registered in 1912. It has a wonderful medium to large pale pink flower with 140 to 170 yellow flared stamens with yellow-white filaments. This camellia does remind us of a morning glory flower but may also be a reference to the glory of morning light.

‘Osaraku’ (Pleasure of a Long Life) is a soft pink Higo camellia registered in 1912. The pale pink flower has six or seven petals with wavy edges and has 130 to 180 stamens with white filaments. Note that there are three large petals that form a triangle which express the Higo principle “*go ben senkaku*.” There are five “*go*” petals arranged on a flat plane, “*ben*,” with three central main petals creating a triangle, “*Senkaku*.”

‘Yamato-Nishiki’ (Brocade of Japan) has a wonderful white flower striped red with white filaments and 200 to 210 stamens. It is an old cultivar from 1830 and an example of a first-class variegated Higo bloom. It is a flower that symbolizes the values of old Japan—poetry and grace—with the contrast of the red stripes on a medium white bloom.

‘Ohkan’ (King’s Crown) has a medium white flower with a lovely rose red border and about 160 stamens that have white filaments. It has a beautiful unforgettable flower, and its slow growth makes it easy to keep in a pot or to bonsai. ‘Ohkan’ mutated from ‘Yamato-Nishiki’ (Brocade of Ancient

Japan) in 1980 and was registered in 1982. Higos are traditionally grown as bonsai and handed down from father to son across the generations. However, they also are grown in the ground where they do very well when treated like other *C. japonica* cultivars.

A classic Higo registered in 1929 is ‘Tancho’ (Manchurian Crane). The bloom has a pure white flower with random crimson stripes and 140 to 180 stamens. There are seven or eight petals. The stamens have white filaments, and the pistil has three to five parts that are taller than the stamens. The leaves are large and oval. The vivid red markings on the seven white petals make a striking flower. It can be grown in the ground or in a pot. The red crowned crane, also known as the Manchurian Crane, is a large East Asian Crane which symbolizes luck, longevity, and fidelity.

In 1974, the city of Kumamoto voted to have the Higo Camellia become its symbol. The national flag of Japan is a white rectangle with a crimson disk in the center officially called Nisshok (“the sun mark flag”) but commonly known as Hi-no-maru (“circle of the sun”). The Higo ‘Hi-no-maru’ (National flag of Japan) has a deep dark red flower with wavy petals, red filaments, and yellow anthers. It has 120 to 150 stamens. Many rate this as the best red higo.

A few Higos have a slightly sweet scent. A good example is ‘Nioi-Fubuki’ (Scented Snowstorm). It has a light sweet scent which is emitted from a medium to large flat single white striped rose red flower. There are 150 stamens with pale yellow filaments and seven petals. It blooms mid to late season on a vigorous upright plant and grows best in the ground. It was



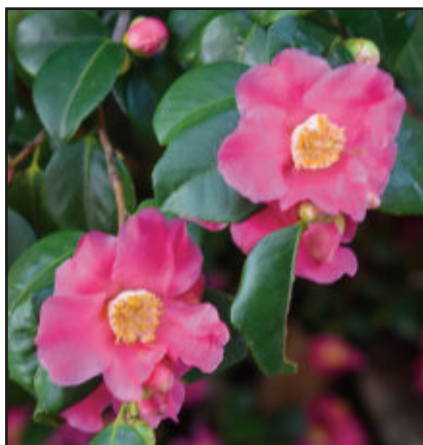
**‘HI-NO-MARU’ IS NATIONAL
FLAG OF JAPAN**



**‘NIOI-FUBUKI’ IS SCENTED
SNOWSTORM**



**'MINATO-NO-AKEBONO' IS
HARBOR AT DAWN**



**'KOTO-NO-KAORI' IS FRAGRANCE
OF THE ANCIENT CITY**

developed in Kumamoto Prefecture, Japan, in 1968. This area of Japan has a humid subtropical climate with hot summers and cool winters. June and July have heavy precipitation. According to Scientific American magazine, there are scents that precede coming storms and some that accompany precipitation, however, poetic license is allowed in naming flowers.

FRAGRANT HYBRIDS

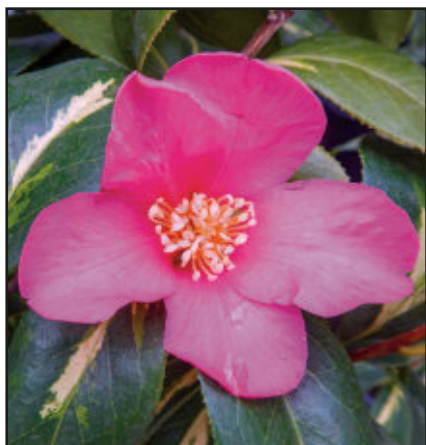
When *C. lutchuensis* is used in camellia hybridizing, lovely scented seedlings can be produced. This provided Japanese hybridizers opportunities to use names that capture a familiar scent when naming their new seedlings. Two of the best are 'Minato-no-akebono' and 'Koto-no-kaori'.

'Minato-no-akebono' (Harbor at Dawn) has a miniature single light pink flower that tones deeper pink. It blooms profusely on an upright loose plant early to midseason. The flower may be a miniature, but it has a lovely sweet scent reminiscent of early morning near a body of water.

The small single fragrant flowers of 'Koto-no-kaori' (Fragrance of the Ancient City) are a lovely shade of rose pink. The plant has a lacy look and grows upright. It too produces numerous flowers early to midseason.

SNOW CAMELLIAS

Since the *C. japonica sub variety rusticana* live in areas of Japan where there is snow, they are known as snow camellias. They are insulated by



‘TAIYO’ IS THE SUN

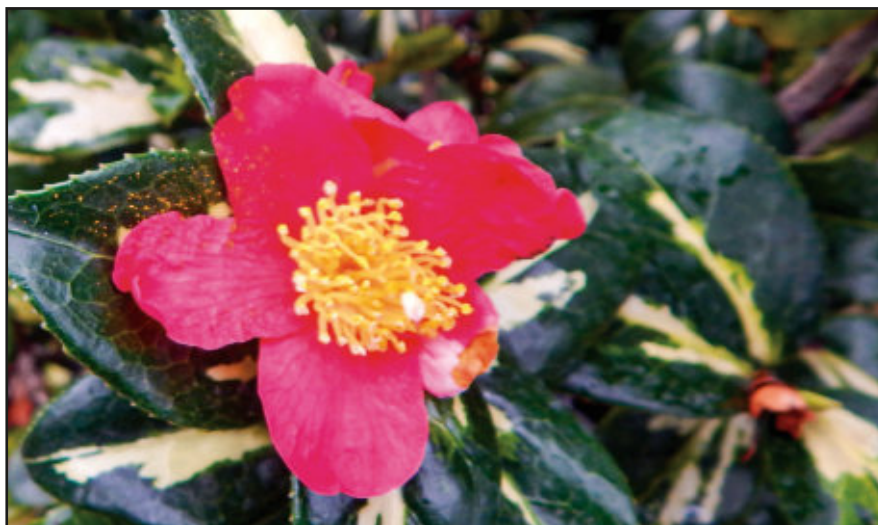


‘BOTAN-YUKI’ IS WHITE PEONY

a covering of snow in the winter, and when the sun melts the snow, they bloom. This may be why ‘Taiyo’ (The Sun) got its name. The glossy dark green leaves with yellow markings make a wonderful foliage camellia. The small coral rose flower looks good nestled among the leaves.

Another beautiful foliage camellia is ‘Reigyoku’ (Beautiful Jewel). The glossy green leaves begin with a central pink patch which matures to a light yellow. The small single orange red flower is like a gem nestled among beautiful leaves.

While ‘Botan-yuki’ (White Peony) has only a miniature creamy flower,



‘REIGYOKU’ IS BEAUTIFUL JEWEL



'SHOKO' IS FIRST YELLOW



'KI-NO-GOZEN' IS THE YELLOW IMPERIAL PALACE



'SENRITSU-KO' IS GOLDEN CHILD

it is valued for its pretty anemone form, abundant blooms, and a yellow aura provided by yellow petaloids.

YELLOW CAMELLIAS

There are two dozen yellow camellias that originate in Japan. They are hybrids with parentage that includes *C. nitidissima* providing the yellow hue. The ones we have in America with interesting names are highlighted here. In 1989, the first one to be registered was introduced by Tadao Yamaguchi. He named the single tubular pale yellow flower 'Shoko' (First Yellow).

Yamaguchi also introduced 'Ki-no-gozen' (Yellow Imperial Palace) in 1990. It has a small single lovely pale yellow sake shaped flower with thick petals. The Emperor and Empress of Japan live in the Palace of Tokyo. It is a majestic white structure set on ancient grounds of the Edo Castle. The park like grounds are planted with native trees and bushes including beautiful cherry trees.

In 1989, Yamaguchi registered a very beautiful small to medium light yellow formal double to rose form double flower with peach on the petal edges. He named it 'Senritsu-Ko' (Golden Child). Tom Nuccio, myself, and others rate this is as the most attractive yellow hybrid camellia.

Kazuo Yoshikawa introduced the pale yellow medium formal double flower called 'Kagirohi' (First Light of Dawn). It has a beautiful yellow flower but is a shy bloomer.

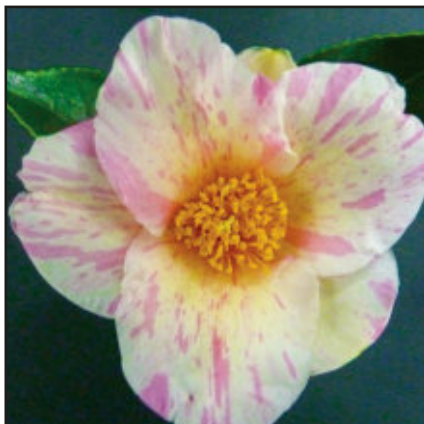
Yoshikawa also introduced 'Kogane-Nishiki' (Golden Brocade) which has a small pale yellow flower with slender stripes of red on its petals. It is the result of a controlled cross between *C. nitidissima* and 'Betty Foy Sanders'. It is clear that the slender red stripes were inherited from 'Betty Foy Sanders' and the yellow cup shaped flower from *C. nitidissima*.

INTERSPECIFIC HYBRIDS

Japanese hybridizers have been actively breeding interspecific hybrids for 50 years. This includes the fragrant and yellow hybrids discussed above. There are no known *C. reticulata* hybrids bred in Japan due to the fact they are not an indigenous species. However, there is one hybrid we enjoy in America that we can't overlook because it has a unique bloom with a thin scent. 'Yume' (Dream) has a small single pink flower with genetic white markings. It is most outstanding when it is "ichimai-gawari" (petals alternate pink and white). Hybridizers, regardless of their country of origin, are dreamers who wish to breed a unique flower like 'Yume'.



'KAGIROHI' IS FIRST LIGHT OF DAWN



'KOGANE-NISHIKI' IS GOLDEN BROCADE



'YUME' IS DREAM



[Return to TOC](#)

LONGUE VUE HOME

CAMELLIA TRAIL GARDENS IN *Louisiana*

BY BRADFORD KING AND FLORENCE CROWDER

Designations of American Camellia Society Trail Gardens were distributed to Longue Vue Gardens in New Orleans, the LSU AgCenter at Burden in Baton Rouge, and Rosedown Plantation and Gardens in St. Francisville. A good time by all was had reviewing the gardens.

Longue Vue Gardens

Longue Vue House and Gardens has been beautifully preserved with the original design of landscape architect Ellen Biddle Shipman updated. Recently, signs depicting this garden as part of the American Camellia Society Camellia Trail were presented by Florence Crowder to Amy Graham, Head Horticulturist with the garden. A major focus is on the camellias as well as fountains and a long rectangular pool with the mansion in the background. Longue Vue Gardens were inspired by the world-famous garden Alhambra located in Spain where fountains and pools are highlighted.



HIGO 'MIYAKO-NO-HARU'

LSU AgCenter at Burden

The Botanic Gardens at Burden is an extensive collection of specialty gardens, woodlands, wetlands, arboreta, and a research facility for faculty. The Camellia Collection consists of over 275 plants of the Vi and Hank Stone Camellia Garden, consisting of Higo camellias, other *C. japonica* introduced by the Stones, and *C. sasanquas*. In addition, there is the Florence and Charles Camellia Collection from the 1800s and camellia cultivars registered from Louisiana. The Baton Rouge Camellia Society helps to maintain, propagate, and sell plants at the facility. American Camellia Society



L TO R: CELESTE RICHARD, AMY GRAHAM, FLORENCE CROWDER, JIM CAMPBELL



L TO R: CELESTE RICHARD, JEFF KUEHNY, FLORENCE CROWDER, MICHAEL RUTH

Trail Committee member, Florence Crowder, presented a sign to Jeff Kuehny recognizing Burden as a member of the Camellia Trail.

Rosedown Plantation and Gardens

Rosedown's Park Manager, Trish Aleshire, received a sign designating the garden as a member of the American Camellia Society's Camellia Trail from members of the American Camellia Society.

Rosedown's house and 28 acres of gardens containing various plantings, including over 50 camellias, were begun in 1836 by owners Daniel and Martha Turnbull and continued throughout Mrs. Turnbull's lifetime. Today, Louisiana's Office of State Parks maintains the house and gardens, 12 historic buildings, and over 300 acres. Tours and programs are presented to illustrate plantation life in the 1800s.



ROSEDOWN PLANTATION AND GARDENS



THE TEAHOUSE AT STORRIER STEARNS JAPANESE GARDEN

Return to TOC

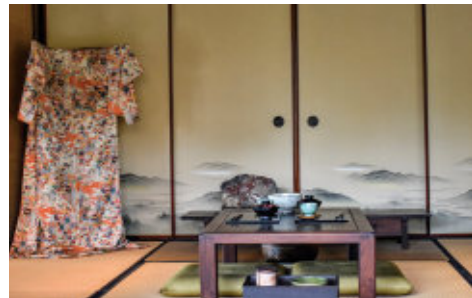
美

WHAT IS *Beauty?*

BY BRADFORD KING

What people consider beautiful depends in part on their culture. Aesthetics is the study of cultural taste. The differences in Eastern and Western aesthetics can be seen in people's preference in their traditional choice of clothes, music, and art. Eastern aesthetics is illustrated here by The Huntington Botanical Gardens Japanese house photo depicting a kimono, a family tea service, and a lovely mountain painting as a background mural.

Western classical music emphasizes homophonic melodies, which means one



THE JAPANESE HOUSE AT
THE HUNTINGTON



THE MIRROR FOUNTAIN

melody is played by all instruments like the music composed by Beethoven, Hayden, and Mozart. Chinese classical music is described as “poetry without words” played on instruments made from silk, bamboo, wood, stone, clay, gourds, and skins. To the Western ear, this music may sound atonal.

Garden designs also reflect the differences in aesthetics. Both Eastern and Western value water garden features, but they are significantly different. Western gardens highlight dramatic fountains. This is illustrated by the



THE SAMSON FOUNTAIN AT PETERHOF PALACE IN SAINT PETERSBURG



**SMALL FOUNTAIN IN THE HUNTINGTON JAPANESE GARDEN
WITH A CHILD**

Fontainebleau Garden created in the mid-1600s for French royalty. It is famous for its very large fountains that spout vast quantities of water.

The Peterhof Palace, nicknamed “The Russian Versailles,” commissioned by Peter the Great, has gardens and fountains inspired by his visit to France in 1717. It also has large fountains with vast amounts of water surrounded by gold statues such as the famous Samson fountain.

In a more contemporary Western garden, fountains spout from large pools surrounded by polished marble placed in an open space like the one in the photo at the Los Angeles Arboretum. The large fountain in the foreground has a mountain range and a vast blue sky as background. This symbolizes freedom, openness, and independence. The open space provides for families to gather, children to play, and seating for large concerts.

These garden fountain styles reflect Western aesthetics which are very different from Asian aesthetics. In Asia, where space is more limited, the garden is more likely to feature natural rocks, a small pool surrounded by foliage plants, and a small fountain created from stone and bamboo. A Japanese teahouse is usually set in a small garden featuring a pond, water statues, and a variety of camellias, azaleas, and evergreen plants. The photo is a private garden teahouse located in the Storrier Stearns Japanese Garden in Pasadena, California, which is a representation of a family teahouse garden in Japan.

Some Japanese fountains are used to refresh oneself before entering the home or to clean oneself before a tea service.



MOON BRIDGE IN DESCANSO GARDENS

A moon bridge is a frequent attraction in a Japanese garden and may either be natural colored or painted a traditional orange hue like the one in the Japanese Garden at Descanso Gardens. In a Chinese garden, a zig zag bridge to ward off evil spirits is frequently highlighted.

One of the interesting features in a Chinese garden is curving walls with cutouts that provide garden views. This is seen in the Portland, Oregon, Lan Su



THE CHINESE GARDEN AT THE HUNTINGTON



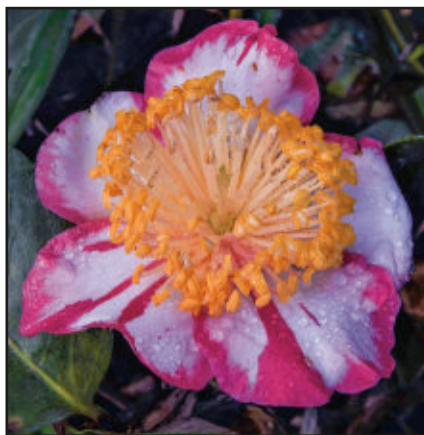
**ZIG ZAG BRIDGE IN THE LAN SU CHINESE GARDEN
IN PORTLAND, OREGON**

Chinese Garden where there is an intimate view of a *C. japonica* ‘Tinsie’ flower.

A second example comes from the Huntington Botanical Gardens where a circular opening provides a frame for an expansive view of a pond with Lotus pods, a bridge, stone rock work, and classic Chinese wooden architecture with an upturned roof.



**‘TINSIE’ FROM A PORTAL IN
THE GARDEN WALL**



‘OHKAN’



CHINESE GARDEN VIEW, HUNTINTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

The upturned eaves on roof corners are one of the best ways to distinguish Chinese architecture from Japanese and Western structures. This can be observed in the Lan Su Chinese Garden where a specimen *C. reticulata* is planted under the classic Chinese upturned eaves. The camellia is not an original Chinese Yunnan *C. reticulata* but a beautiful *C. reticulata* X *C. japonica* hybrid, 'Dr. Clifford Parks'. A wonderful blending of classic architecture with a recent camellia that is enjoyed by Eastern and Western people.

Large and very large red *C. reticulata* are cherished in China and are also highly valued in America where large and red are a masculine aesthetic preference. It has been reported that William Woodruff, the first editor of the *Camellia Nomenclature*, was known to state that a winning show camellia flower should be big and red. In Valdosta, Georgia, Hulyn Smith, a prolific hybridizer, was known to favor red camellias—the bigger the better. While it is true that culture influences what we perceive as beautiful, there are other variables—gender, experience, and individual differences.

Flower arranging is a creative endeavor loved in the East and West, but again there are significant differences. Asian floral design is not standardized but free form with a focus on mood. Asymmetrical natural designs are valued with three points forming a triangle. There are many Japanese Ikebana schools of floral design, but they share the principle that less is better. This has been described as beauty by elimination. An Ikebana composi-

tion resembles tree branches. Geometrically, the composition is a scalene triangle (all sides are different length, and all angles are different). This is illustrated by an asymmetrical Ikebana floral arrangement of five small red camellias, buds, leaves, branches with leaves removed to highlight the bark, and multiple slender twisted branches. The overall composition is consistent with a scalene triangle as no sides or angles are identical.

In a Western style of floral design, there is a focus on large quantities of floral material. The composition follows standard geometric designs and is most likely symmetrical. It can be described as adding beauty. This is illustrated by a formal symmetrical triangle composition filled with beautiful camellias with the added touch of many tiny pink flowers on slender twist-



'DR. CLIFFORD PARKS' IN BLOOM AT LAN SU



AN IKEBANA ARRANGEMENT



A FORMAL WESTERN ARRANGEMENT MADE BY PAT JOHNSON



‘FUKURIN-WABISUKE’

ing branches that are arranged to conform with the triangle composition. This adds a soft pretty frame to the red camellias and green foliage.

The Japanese offer a counterpoint to the view that bigger is better and that symmetry is more pleasing than asymmetry. This can be seen in “Wabi-sabi,” a Japanese aesthetic style that has evolved for centuries. It is based on three simple realities: nothing lasts, nothing is finished, and nothing is perfect. It may be simply defined as “flawed beauty.” The Japanese single camellia flowers, like ‘Fukurin-wabisuke’, may be overlooked by those that see red and demand size, yet their simple beauty cannot be overlooked.

The Japanese appreciation of the asymmetry of a Higo camellia, with random markings, is consistent with the aesthetics of “Wabi-sabi.” The classic Higo bloom is an asymmetrical single with five to nine large petals and a dense central mass of 150 to 200 beautiful stamens. This irregular form is considered an asset because it serves to emphasize the symmetry of the striking stamens. The Higo aesthetic principles are called “go ben senkaku.” This is illustrated by ‘Ohkan’ which has five (“go”) petals, arranged on a flat plane (“ben”), with three main petals creating a triangle.

After all is said and done, **nothing is perfect...**

CAMELLIAS

— FROM —

"THE RISING SUN"

BY BRADFORD KING

According to Wikipedia, Japan is an island country located in East Asia that encompasses an archipelago of about 6,852 islands with five main islands. Japan is divided into 47 prefectures. About two-thirds of the country is mountainous and heavily forested. Japan is densely populated with its capital, the city of Tokyo, having more people than any city in the world.

C. japonica, also known as the Japanese camellia or tsubaki and sometimes referred to as the rose of winter, originates in southeast Asia, especially Japan where it has been cultivated for hundreds of years. Three Japanese Americans brought camellias to the USA in the early nineteen hundreds. Several camellia nurseries are also responsible for importing varieties cherished today. In addition, many camellias found their way into the states in ways that are not documented. As you recall, before strict agricultural restrictions, people brought home or shipped plant material to themselves. There is no doubt that multiple sources have imported the same cultivar over the years.

F.M. Uyematsu

Mr. F.M. Uyematsu was an important camellia importer in the early 1900s. He came from his native Japan as a 23-year-old in 1904. He and a friend began importing plants in 1908 from Japan to Figueroa Nursery in Los Angeles. In 1912, he moved to a five-acre lot in Montebello, California, and established a wholesale business named "Star Nursery." Over the years Star Nursery imported



‘TINSIE’

hundreds of thousands of camellias. He paid 3 cents for camellias in Japan, 5 cents to import them to the U.S. and sold them for 25 cents in cartloads of up to 60,000. In the English translation of *The Japanese Camellias of Japan*, it is reported that Star Nursery imported five Japanese named camellias and released them with new English names. This is illustrated by ‘Tinsie’ whose Japanese name is ‘Bokuhan.’ They also report that 65 named varieties were exported most likely from Yoshimasa Nursery. Most of the names were unfamiliar, but ‘Akebono’ is one we see that Star Nursery imported.



‘AKEBONO’



‘BERENICE BODDY’

When Mr. Uyematsu was interned during World War II, he sold his camellias to Manchester Boddy, founder of Descanso Gardens, and Mr. Jones, President of Richmond Oil Company. One that was propagated was named 'Berenice Boddy'. It is widely distributed and was used by Dr. Clifford Parks in several of his crosses that resulted in the cold hardy April series.

Toichi Domoto

Toichi was a pioneer camellia grower and breeder who introduced camellias from Japan to the United States through his nursery in Hayward, California, as well as breeding new cultivars. There are about a dozen camellias Toichi brought to America that are rarely if ever seen today. However, we may see some of his introductions around older homes or enjoy them in public gardens. For example, 'Pink Ball' and 'Purity' are found in The Huntington Botanical Gardens in San Marino, California.

'Pink Ball' has a lovely medium full peony soft pink flower that arrived in 1935 from Japan. It is like 'Debutante' in that it has a full peony flower but is a lighter color.

'Purity' is a popular rose form double white that is seen in many private and public gardens. This pretty flower blooms mid to late season. 'Purity' is still seen at camellia shows where it is capable of winning when in top condition. It was imported in 1887 by Domoto Nurseries which was run by Toichi's family, most likely his father, as Toichi was born in 1902. Domoto Nursery changed the Japanese name from 'Kagiri' to 'Purity'.

The most popular and widely known of the cultivars he was responsible



'PINK BALL'



'PURITY'



‘PINK PERFECTION’ IN FULL BLOOM

for bringing to America is ‘Pink Perfection’ which was imported in the 1930s but was known as ‘Usu-Otome’ in Japan. The flower is a small perfectly formed pink formal double still frequently seen in camellia shows and home gardens. Trees twenty feet tall can be seen when they have been left to grow naturally. They are spectacular when in full bloom.

Kosaku Sawada

In 1914, Sawada bought land in Mobile, Alabama. In 1916, Kosaku Sawada married Nobu Yosioka who brought a dowry of around 500 camellia seeds. They moved in 1918 to the land he owned. The nursery overlooked the city, so the nursery was named Overlook. The seeds were planted in spring 1917. Each year more seeds were planted. The first outstanding varieties came from seeds planted in 1925. A dozen of the most desirable were selected to be propagated and marketed to the public. Several have survived the test of time and are still seen in public gardens and older private collections. These include ‘K. Sawada’ which has a large



‘SAWADA’S DREAM’

white formal double flower, 'Frizzle White' which has a large white semi-double flower, 'Queen Besse' which has a large blush-colored semidouble flower and 'Sara-sa' which has a medium to large flesh-colored semidouble flower with dotted and striped deeper pink markings.

In the mid 1940s, fourteen *C. japonica* varieties were introduced by Overlook Nurseries. 'Sawada's Dream,' introduced in 1958, is the most famous camellia introduced by Overlook Nurseries. It has a medium formal double white bloom with a lovely light pink on the petal edges.

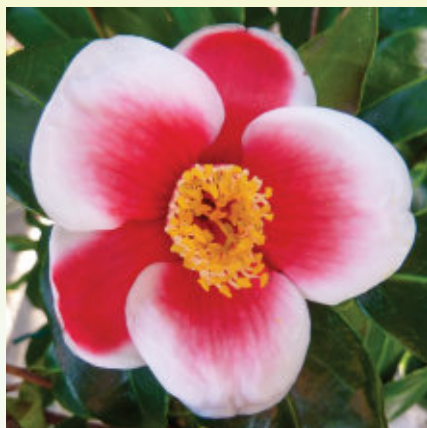
Sacramento Nursery released 'Herme' and Pink Perfection in 1875. They are classic well-known camellia varieties that are widely grown.

Nuccio's Nurseries

This nursery was founded by two brothers, Joe and Julius Nuccio, in 1935. In addition to introducing over 200 new camellias, they are responsible for bringing several desirable camellias to the states. They visited Japan for more than a dozen years taking flowers for a camellia show sponsored by Atagawa Tropical Gardens and Alligator farms who provided them Higo camellia, *C. rusticana* and many camellia species for the nursery. Tom and Jim Nuccio, who currently run the nursery, each visited Japan three times, and on a fourth trip Tom traveled to Yunnan, China.

These relationships continued over the years making it possible to import 'Tama-no-Ura' and 'Kakureiso' in 1978. 'Tama-no-Ura' is famous for its bright red flower with a white border that can be inherited.

In 2007, Nuccio's released six yellow nonreticulata hybrids bred by



'TAMA-NO-URA'

Tadao Yamaguchi of Ishikawa. He introduced the first of these in 1989 calling it 'Shoko' which means "First Yellow." The most beautiful of his yellow camellias is 'Senritsuko.' It has a small to medium light yellow formal double to rose form double flower with peach pink on the petal edges.

Also in 2007, Nuccio's offered three hybrid camellias bred by Kazuo Yoshikawa of Osaka. One of the



‘SENITSU-KO’

largest yellow camellias is ‘Ki-no-Moto #95.’ It is a cross between ‘LASCA Beauty,’ which is a *reticulata/japonica* cross, and *C. nitidissima* which produced a large light yellow semidouble flower. However, the cross made between ‘Betty Foy Sanders’ and *C. nitidissima* is the most interesting, as the small single flower clearly inherited its yellow tint from *C. nitidissima* and the slender red stripe from ‘Betty Foy Sanders.’ He named it ‘Kogane Nishiki’ which means golden brocade.

The Classics

Some of the most popular Japanese camellias grown in America had their names changed when they were marketed in the USA. ‘Pink Perfection’ and ‘Tinsie’ were discussed earlier.

‘Hagoromo’ is known in America as ‘Magnoliaeflora’ because it resembles a magnolia flower and has abundant flowers. It was exported by Yokohama Nursery in 1879.

‘Hermé’ is also called ‘Jordan’s Pride’ in America but its original name is ‘Hikaru-Genji’ (Hero of Genji Story) exported by Yokohama Nursery in 1879. The story describes Genji as a genius who is a very handsome member of nobility demoted from royalty. The flower is a pink medium semidouble with an irregular white border.

Japanese Names

Many of the Japanese cultivar's names were retained. A few of the varieties that have been in America for years are 'Haru-no-utena,' 'Hishi-Karaito,' 'Kumasaka,' 'Kuro-tsubaki' and 'Miyako-dori.'

When 'Haru-no-utena' (Spring Song) left Japan is not documented, but it is well known in the camellia states for its medium tubular semi-double white flower spotted and striped in red and pink. At times the flower is a pale pink rather than white. The markings and upright petals make it easily recognized.

'Hishi-Karaito' has a small semidouble lovely pink flower with a fountain of white petaloids and stamens in the center. The flower was first distributed in 1934 by Kobe's Chuagi Nursery. However, it dates back in Japanese camellia literature to 1844. The name 'Hishi-Karaito' comes from the diamond-shaped petals with its stamens and petaloids that look like silk threads.

In 1896, a cold hardy camellia 'Kumasaka' was introduced in Japan and sometime later made it to America where it is well regarded for its medium rose pink rose form to peony flower.

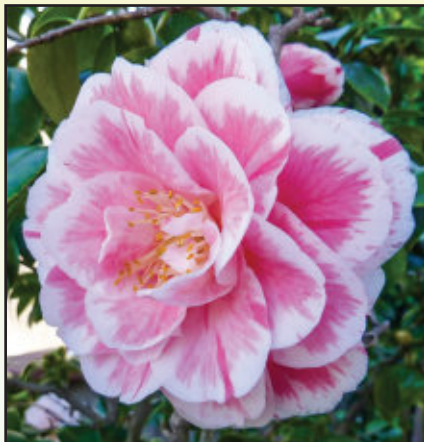
'Kuro-tsubaki' means the black camellia. Dr. William Ackerman conducted cytological examination



'KOGANE NISHIKI'



'MAGNOLIAEFLORA'



'HERME'

of ‘Kuro-tsubaki’ and discovered that it had an abnormally long chromosome which is responsible for its dark red flower and the red tones of its stems and roots. These genetic characteristics were passed on to ‘Black Opal’ and ‘Night Rider.’

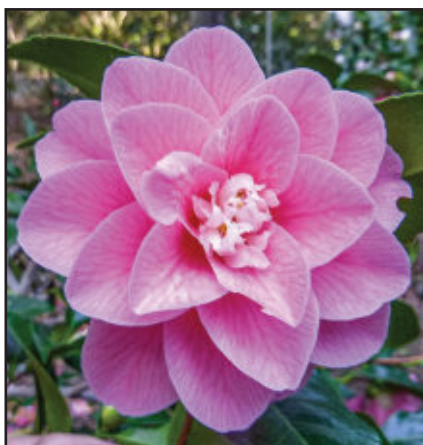
‘Miyako-dori’ means seagull. This medium to large white semi-double flower has petals that are narrow and stand up like the wings of a seagull. It was exported first in 1891 by Yokohama Nursery.

C. japonica* Subspecies *rusticana

‘Yuki-tsubaki’ (snow camellias) or *C. rusticana* camellias are a japonica subspecies that come from higher elevations in Japan where they can survive and grow insulated by a layer of snow. When the snow melts, they burst into colorful blooms. Generally, *C. rusticana* are characterized by their bushy, compact growth with slender supple branches and red flowers. However, some of the best *C. rusticana* come in a variety of colors—white, pink and variegated. They are not frequently seen at camellia shows. They make good foreground landscape camellias where their small and profuse blooms can be appreciated. They are not cold hardy and grow well in



‘HARU-NO-UTENA’



‘HISHI-KARAITO’



‘KUMASAKA’



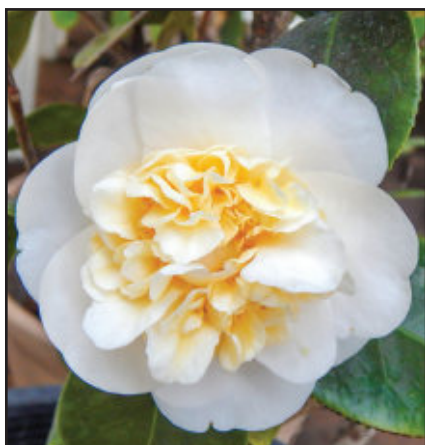
‘KURO-TSUBAKI’

very humid weather, so unless provided adequate moisture, they may not be at their best in dry areas. One *C. rusticana* cultivar we see is ‘Botanyuki’ (Snow Peony). It was collected in 1958 in Niigata, Japan. It is a miniature flower with an anemone form. It has a nice blush pink flower with a yellow petaloids center which makes for an attractive flower. The bud is peach pink. It is a mid-season bloomer on a compact upright plant.

‘Shiro Karako’ (White Anemone) is one of the best *C. rusticana* camellias and can compete with any of the small japonica cultivars. It has a long history in Japan dating back to 1788. It is a white miniature to small flower with an anemone form that grows on a vigorous spreading plant. The blooms are uniform but may be a little irregular with notched petals. The *Camellia Nomenclature* has listed 60 rusticana cultivars all with Japanese names reflecting their country of origin. Nuccio’s Nurseries lists fifteen rusticana camellias. There are a few snow camellias with pink flowers that



MIYAKO-DORI'



'BOTAN-YUKI'



'IZUMI'

are interesting and appealing garden cultivars. The lovely pale pink semidouble 'Izumi' has an attractive tubular-shaped medium flower that grows on a bushy round plant. It blooms mid to late season.

***C. hiemalis* Group**

The origin of this species is unknown and may be a hybrid between *C. japonica* and *C. sasanqua*. In Japan, they are considered descendants of 'Shishi-Gashira.' They have flowers with many petals and bloom early on a spreading shrub. There are 35 listed in *The Camellias of Japan*. Three imported to America that are well known are 'Kanjiro,' 'Shishi-Gashira' and 'Showa-no-sakae.'

***C. vernalis* Group**

This species is most likely a hybrid between *C. sasanqua* and *C. japonica*. The *C. hiemalis*, *C. vernalis* and *C. sasanqua* are frequently grouped together as sun camellias. The *Camellias of Japan* lists 27 varieties as part of the *C. hiemalis* group. The best known in America is 'Egao' (Smiling Face) imported by Nuccio's Nurseries in 1977.

***C. sasanqua* Group**

There are approximately fifty *C. sasanqua* that originated in Japan and

at least a dozen that continue to be grown in America. Three of the most popular are discussed here. ‘Mini-no-Yuki’ (“Snow on the ridge”) is sold frequently as ‘White Doves’ which is a low growing semidouble with a white frilly flower. ‘Narumi-gata’ has a single white flower with a pink edge. ‘Setsugekka’ has a large semidouble white ruffled flower.



‘SHOWA-NO-SAKAE’

Fragrant Japanese Camellias

The fragrant *C. lutchuensis* is from the Rynukyu Island, Japan. While the small white flower is unimpressive, its sweet scent is wonderful. It is in the genetics of almost all the nonreticulata fragrant hybrids. Two of the best were introduced in Japan.

‘Minato-no-akebono’ (Harbor at Dawn) has a miniature single light



‘EGAO’



‘NARUMIGATA’



C. lutchuensis

pink flower that tones deeper pink. It blooms profusely on an upright loose plant early to midseason. The flower may be a miniature, but it has a lovely, sweet scent. The white buds, splashed with purplish red spots, are very attractive, especially in clusters.

The small single fragrant flowers of ‘Koto-no-kaori’ are a lovely shade of rose pink. The plant has a lacy look and grows upright. It too produces numerous flowers early to midseason.



‘MINATO-NO-AKEBONO’



‘KOTO-NO-KAORI’

Higo Camellias

Higos are noted for their mass of stamens and bright colorful irregular single flat flowers with 5 to 7 large petals. They are a type of *C. japonica* that originates in Japan. The Higo Camellia Society was founded in Kumanoto, Japan, in 1958. Five members of the Higo Society Registration Committee observed the plant for five years to ensure that the flower pattern is stable. There must be at least 100 plants for sale at the time of registration. The *Higo Camellia* by Ghirardi lists 120 varieties. How and when the several dozen Higo camellias grown in America were imported is not documented. Tom Nuccio told me that they received the Higos they propagate from Atagawa Tropical Gardens and Alligator Farm. The iconic Higo must have a central mass of stamens like the spokes of a wheel. This is illustrated by the pale pink ‘Asagao’ which has 140 to 175 flared stamens.

Higos come in a range of color tones including white, pink, red, white with red streaks and white with rose red border. The irregular-shaped Higo flower, with uneven markings on a few petals, may not appeal to western aesthetic taste but is appreciated in Japanese culture, especially when there is a mass of beautiful central stamens on an ancient classic such as ‘Tancho.’



‘ASAGAO’



‘TANCHO’

C. wabisuke

The *C. wabisuke* (pronounced “wa-bis-kay”) camellias of Japan are similar in appearance to *C. japonica*. While the origin is unknown, it is considered either a Japonica subspecies or a Japonica hybrid. Generally, the plants



‘TAROKAJA’ AKA ‘JUDITH’

are small to medium leaved and shrubby. The flowers are tubular, single and small. Most have stamens with very few pollen sacs or none at all. The *Camellia Nomenclature* lists 22 *C. wabisuke* cultivars all originating in Japan. The most well-known *C. wabisuke* is called ‘Judith’ in America. How it acquired this name is unknown; its Japanese name is ‘Tarokaja.’ The flower is a miniature to small single deep pink that grows on a slow compact bushy plant and blooms mid to late season. There are reports of this cultivar setting seeds, but this is a rare occurrence. There are large ancient specimen trees of this cultivar in Japan.

There are several fragrant *C. wabisuke* which makes them appealing. This is illustrated by the cultivar ‘Fukurin wabisuke’ (Bordered wabisuke). The flower is a light pink small single with a white border.



‘FUKURIN WABISUKE’

Foliage Camellias

There are several camellias grown for their interesting foliage that originated in Japan. This is illustrated by ‘Kujaku-tsubaki’ (the Peacock Camellia) which has long narrow peach-like leaves with a small single red mottled white flower with tubular slender petals. It blooms mid to late season on a semi cascading plant. It was discovered in a family garden in 1962.

‘Pink Mermaid’ may be considered a subspecies of *C. japonica* sometimes called *C. japonica variety quercifolia*. It was introduced into North



‘KUJAKU-TSUBAKI’

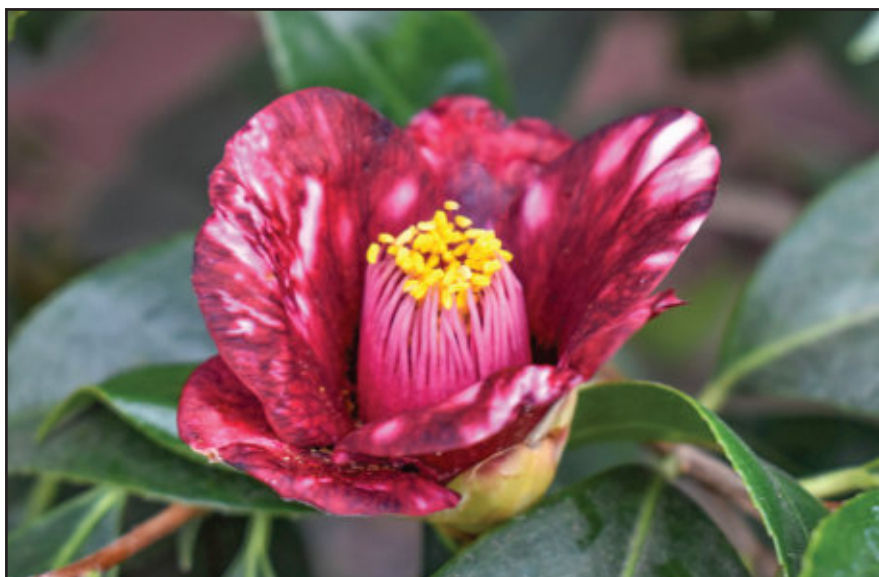
America from Japan by Piroche Plants, British Columbia, Canada, in 1994. The flower is a single light pink with a thin scent. The leaves narrow down and flare out with three points which look like a fish-tail. The Japanese name 'Kingyotsubaki' means "Fishtail camellia." It has a sport 'White Mermaid' which inherited the fishtail and a very slight scent.



'PINK MERMAID'

Japanese Aesthetics

"Wabi-sabi" is a Japanese aesthetic style that has evolved for centuries. It is based on three simple realities: nothing lasts, nothing is finished and nothing is perfect. It may be simply defined as "flawed beauty." This can be seen in the Japanese appreciation of the irregular and random marks on a Higo camellia and in the beauty of small single camellia flowers that may be overlooked in Western culture. The beauty of 'Fukutsuzumi (Fortune's Hand Drum), however, is one both cultures can enjoy!



'FUKUTSUZUMI'



RED MAPLE SEEDS

[Return to TOC](#)

Camellia Fruit

BY BRADFORD KING

All plants need to reproduce to continue their species. Many trees have blooms we may never notice. The wonderful varieties of decorative Red Maples, for example, have blooms that are easily overlooked. However, their seeds are attractive and look like twin airplane wings which as a child you may have worn on your nose allowing the sap to hold it in place while playing with friends. Camellias, even the species with tiny white flowers, are recognizable. Mother Nature, assisted by intentional breeding, has produced beautiful flowers that are propagated for home gardens. The major camellia ornamentals are *C. sasanqua*, *C. japonica*, *C. reticulata* and the nonreticulata hybrids. Their varieties are propagated by grafting and rooting cuttings which is done to replicate the specific cultivar.

Camellia Seed Development

New camellia cultivars are grown from seed. This occurs when camellia fruit develops after pollen is placed on the stigma. This may be the result of intentional crosses or chance crosses by birds and insects, especially bees.

There are two cells in a grain of pollen. One grows a long pollen tube that penetrates the pistil's tissue and enters the microscopic opening in one of the ovaries. The second cell divides into two sperm that move down the pollen tube and enter the ovule. The ovule needs to have a viable egg ready for fertilization. If all this occurs, a zygote is formed when one of the sperm cells unites with the egg. The second sperm cell combines with another cell which develops into the endosperm which serves to nourish the zygote that develops into an embryo. The embryo is a miniature replica of the plant. The ovules grow and mature into seeds enclosed by the ovary until the fruit is formed. In camellias, the fruit is also known as a pod which has three chambers (locules) that typically have one to nine seeds.

Pods in the Spring

Flowers that bloom in the winter when fertilized will slowly develop fruit. By May the pods are easily observed. I remove pods except those I plan to germinate. It takes plant energy to develop seeds which is why I remove seed pods to help maintain the plant's optimal vitality. There is no problem if you don't. They will develop, open and drop the seeds on the ground. Later you may see a black open-spent pod hidden among the leaves.

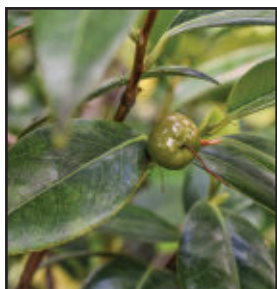
Camellia pods in the spring are still growing, therefore, they tend to be small and green, generally oval-shaped, but others may be odd shaped. These oddities should be removed unless it is a valuable intentional cross. Why waste the plant's energy.



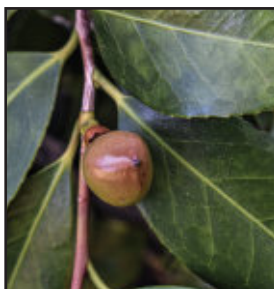
A SPENT POD



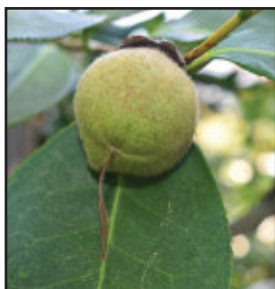
'SHISHI GASHIRA' DEFORMED POD



C. hiemalis
'SHISHI GASHIRA'
IN MAY



C. japonica
'TAMA PEACOCK'
IN MAY



C. reticulata
'LASCA BEAUTY'
IN MAY

Typical camellia pods in May are illustrated above.

Variegated camellias will develop fruit with viable seeds, but the virus that produces white markings on a flower is not inherited.

Pods in the Summer

During the long days of summer sunlight, seeds are maturing in their pods. This is also the time when flower buds begin to form.

The 'Shishi-Gashira' fruit has grown to the size of a small marble with visible hair on the pod, a characteristic of this species.



C. reticulata 'FRANK HOUSER VARIEGATED' POD AND VARIEGATED LEAF

The 'Tama Peacock' pod grew to the size of a smooth golf ball and developed a lovely red tint.

The 'LASCA Beauty' pod grew somewhat larger than a golf ball and looks like a miniature cantaloupe. This rough textured cover is a typical characteristic of *C. reticulata* fruit.

Pods in the Fall

Camellia pods split open when mature, and the seeds fall out. They may be harvested before they open or covered with a jewelry bag to catch the seeds.

'Shishi-Gashira,' as well as many *C. sasanquas* seeds, may have visible hairs. Generally, the seeds are smaller than *C. japonica* and *C. reticulata* seeds.

As the pod opens, seeds are revealed. The seeds' outer cover is hard, black and impervious to water. Light colored tan seeds may not germinate.

Germination may be encouraged if the surface is scraped. John Wang soaks the new seeds overnight and peels most of the seed covering off before placing them in containers to be grown in a lighted fish tank. I like to use germinating containers one-third filled with moist peat moss that are placed in a sheltered area of the garden. The traditional method is to place seeds



'SHISHI-GASHIRA' WITH HAIR



BRONZE POD

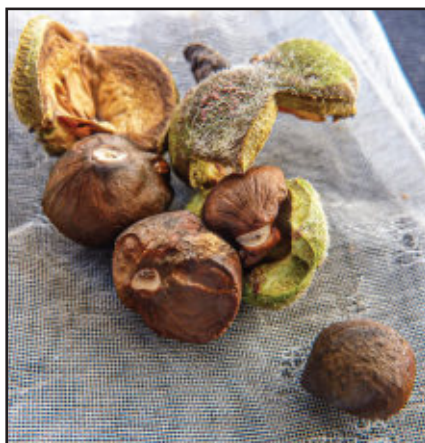


C. RETICULATA POD



OPEN POD WITH 6 *C. japonica* SEEDS

in pots or flats. They may be grown outdoors, in a greenhouse or in other protected structures that receive partial sun. The seeds are covered with 1/4 of an inch loose soil and labeled. If the seed parent is known, it is so labeled. If both parents are known, the label would show the 'seed parent name' then 'X' followed by the 'pollen parent name.'



***C. SASANQUA* SEEDS**



TAN SEEDS AND BLACK SEEDS



LADY BUGS ON A NEW LEAF



CAMELLIAS AND INSECTS

BY BRADFORD KING



There are pests and beneficial insects that can be found on camellias. We begin with pests, saving the good news for last.

Camellia Pests

A common camellia pest is **aphids**. They love sucking the juices in new camellia leaves. They are small sap-sucking insects. The typical life cycle involves flightless females giving live birth to female nymphs. They are easily removed by spraying them with water or by using a spray bottle with insecticidal soap like “Safer” or a small amount of mild liquid soap mixed in the water.

There are many **grasshoppers** that may nibble on camellia buds and foliage. Some types blend in with green foliage while other varieties are brown. When possible, I catch and eliminate them. There are birds, lizards and praying mantis that feed on them. Usually grasshoppers are more annoying than destructive to camellias.

Spider mites live on the undersides of leaves where they spin webs to help protect the colony from predators, thereby getting the name spider mites. They cause damage to the foliage by puncturing the foliage cells to feed which robs the camellia of its vitality. This can be critical in a drought when adequate moisture is not provided. The spider mites are less than .039 inches and vary in color. They lay small, spherical transparent eggs. Hot dry conditions are when they are most prolific. When temperatures are 80°F or more and humidity



APHIDS ON A CAMELLIA LEAF



GRASSHOPPER

less than 60%, a spider mite can hatch in as little as 3 days and become sexually mature in five days. One female can lay as many as 20 eggs a day and live for 2 to 4 weeks thus laying thousands of eggs. This accelerated reproductive rate allows spider mite populations to adapt quickly to resist chemical control methods. When the same pesticide is used over a prolonged period, it may become ineffective. Spider mites develop from eggs which usually are laid near the veins of leaves during the growing season. The first sign is usually foliage that looks dirty but is not removed by a spray of water. The top of the camellia leaf turns a gray dusty green or rusty bronze when infested. The underside of the leaf is where they live and breed. It may be hard to see the spider mites themselves with the naked eye even when they are active.

They look like dark bumps on the underside of the leaf. The presence of small white webs on the underside of the leaves is the conclusive sign of the presence of a spider mite colony.

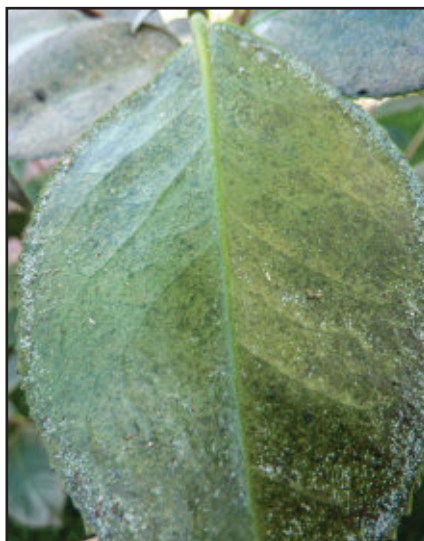
Camellias in containers and that are infested should be isolated and kept together. This will reduce the risk of the infestation spreading. Spider mites are able to move from plant to plant on air currents. Keeping the infested camellias in a group will help in retaining moisture by reducing air flow between plants. The best way is to spray them with cold water several times a day thereby drowning mites and removing eggs as well as providing moisture and cooling. Special attention is given to spraying the underside of the leaves as that is where they live and breed.

Camellias planted in the ground obviously can't be moved and isolated in clusters, but a careful firm spray of the foliage, especially the underside, with cold water is a first step in their control. The use of insecticidal soap or oil spray is a good second step. Petroleum-based horticultural oils or neem oils are acceptable if applied when temperatures are less than 90°F. Oils and soaps must contact mites to kill them, so full coverage of the foliage, especially on the undersides of leaves, is essential. Spraying once a week for three weeks will control the outbreak.

Camellias are hardy and most are disease and pest-free. Good camellia culture will prevent most problems before they occur. Occasionally a new plant or an individual cultivar will develop a problem.



TOP OF AN INFECTED LEAF



THE UNDERSIDE OF A LEAF

Beneficial Insects

Honeybees, bumblebees and ants are the most likely insects to pollinate camellias as they have been observed frequently in camellia flowers. When a flower is pollinated, it can develop a seed pod. This is illustrated with a black bumble bee nestled in the *C. sasanqua* 'Double Rainbow'.

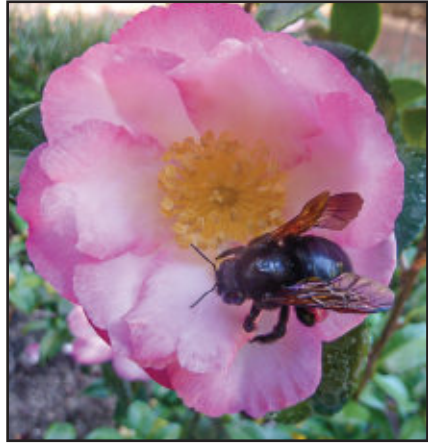
Bees are seen frequently in camellia flowers. Honeybees are highly attracted to *C. sinensis*, the tea plant.

While I have no proof that ants pollinate camellias, they are frequently found in camellia blooms. This is seen in the photo of 'Kona' which is inundated with ants.

Ladybugs are welcomed in the garden because an adult ladybug may consume hundreds of aphids a day and thousands in its lifetime. In addition, ladybugs feed on other soft-bodied, plant-eating insects such as Mites, Scales, Thrips and White Flies. While they are found in most gardens, they may be purchased and released to help control pests.

Good and Bad Insects

The Praying Mantis looks like it is in the act of praying when in fact it is preying on insects. It is an indiscriminate predator that will eat



BUMBLEBEE IN 'DOUBLE RAINBOW'



TWO BEES IN A TEA FLOWER



'KONA' WITH ANTS

beneficial insects like bees but also pests like flies and is known to occasionally prey on hummingbirds. They can be either green or brown but do not change colors like a chameleon. When young, they feed on small insects like aphids. When mature, they can be found patiently waiting to catch grasshoppers and other insects. It is interesting to buy a Mantis egg mass which is surrounded by a protein foam that



MANTIS HATCHING

hardens into a tough casing and protects the eggs. The case is laid in the fall on a small branch or twig. In spring or early fall, as temperatures warm, the mantis hatch. Many garden centers sell egg cases that can be attached to a twig in the fall and monitored in warm weather to see them hatch.



FEMALE PRAYING MANTIS ON ‘HUGH EVANS’



'DR. CLIFFORD PARKS' IN BLOOM IN THE PORTLAND CHINESE GARDEN

A Tribute to **Dr. Clifford Parks**

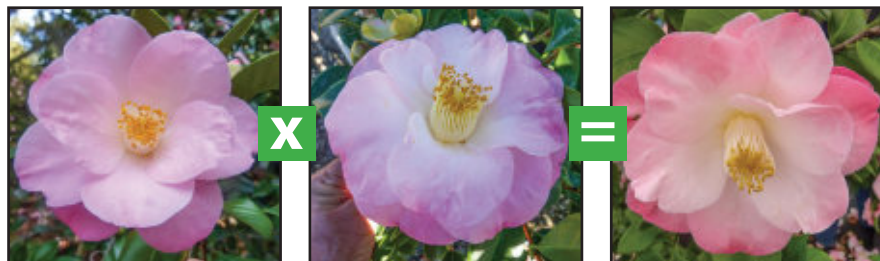
BY BRADFORD KING

While we will miss our camellia friend Clifford Parks (March 1936-July 2020), we will continue to remember him when we enjoy the camellias he introduced. He registered 59 new camellias during his long, productive career. Specifically, he bred and registered 20 *C. japonica*, 15 *C. reticulata* hybrids, 19 nonreticulata hybrids, 2 *C. hiemalis* and 3 *C. sasanqua*. A complete list of the camellias he introduced is published in this *Camellia Yearbook*. We have photos of those printed in blue. We are looking for those in black print. If you have a photo of them, please send them to me at bdk@usc.edu.

Cold Hardy *C. Japonica* Hybrids

Dr. Parks was a pioneer hybridizer of cold hardy camellias. He introduced a dozen *C. japonica* cultivars which are known as the April series for their spring blooming season. In addition, he bred two fall-blooming cold hardy cultivars, ‘Autumn Spirit’ and ‘Red Jade,’ that bloom late January to February. Frequently he used ‘Berenice Boddy’ as the pollen parent. This includes the popular ‘April Remembered’ which has a medium to large semidouble cream to pink shaded flower. The seed parent was ‘Dr. Tinsley.’

Candy-striped flowers are very attractive which makes his ‘April Dawn’ a favorite. The flower is white with varying amounts of pink stripes. The



‘BERENICE BODDY’ X ‘DR. TINSLEY’= ‘APRIL REMEMBERED’



'APRIL KISS' Photo by Gene Phillips

small to medium formal double flower is especially variable. It can produce all white or all pink or half white and half pink blooms. It has a long blooming season and produces many flowers which are hardy to zone 6B.

The earliest blooming of the April series is **'April Kiss.'** The small to medium pinkish red formal double flower has a heavy bud set and is borne on a vigorous upright plant of slow to average growth. It is hardy to zone 6B.

The very compact slow-growing plant of **'April Rose'** has a medium rose red formal double flower. It is a late-season bloomer that is cold hardy in zone 6B. Dr. Parks' son David reports it was the only one of thousands



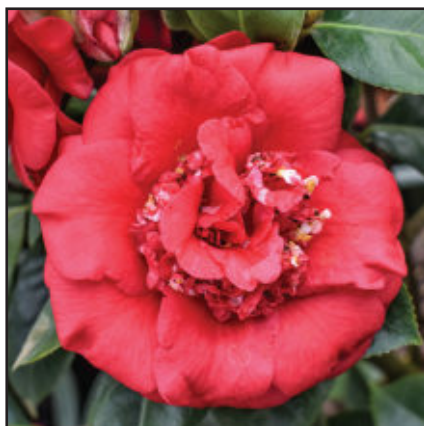
'APRIL DAWN' Photo by Gene Phillips



'APRIL ROSE' Photo by Gene Phillips



'SURVIVOR' Photo by Gene Phillips



'APRIL TRYST'

of plants to bloom in 1985 when temperatures reached -9°F with no winter dieback recorded.

'Survivor' has a small single very cold hardy flower. It is a hybrid cross between *C. sasanqua* 'Narumigata' and *C. oleifera*.

'April Tryst' has a medium bright red anemone flower. The plant grows upright, has a heavy bud set and long blooming season. According to David Parks, even in cold weather the flowers open undamaged.

In 1995, Dr. Parks registered a cold hardy (zone 7A) *C. reticulata* X *C. fraterna* hybrid he named **'Crimson Candles.'** The heavy bud set produces lovely red candle-shaped buds which open to a small bright rose red single flower. It blooms February to March, then a new growth flush produces bronze foliage.

***C. reticulata* Hybrids**

Besides 'Crimson Candles' he bred two award-winning *C. reticulata* hybrids that still win at camellia shows and make great garden plants.

Clifford Parks Ph.D. graduated from Cornell University and North Carolina State University. He began breeding camellias in his first job working in the Los Angeles County and State Arboretum in Arcadia, California, as a botanist. In 1967, he was preparing to move to North Carolina. He planned to take only potentially cold hard camellias. Therefore, he arranged with David Feathers and the Northern California Research Group to take his *C. reticulata* hybrids. They were given the rights to introduce and name any that were distinctive. They named one 'Dr. Clifford Parks' and another 'LASCA Beauty.'

In 1971, they registered **'Dr. Clifford Parks'** which has a very large red



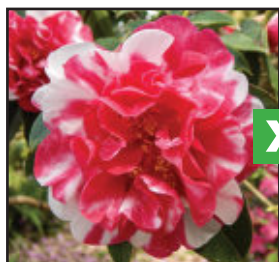
‘CRIMSON CANDLES’

flower. It is one of the cultivars with several forms--semidouble, anemone, loose peony and full peony. It was awarded the Harris Hybrid Award in 1977 and the Charlotte C. Knox Reticulata award in 1989.

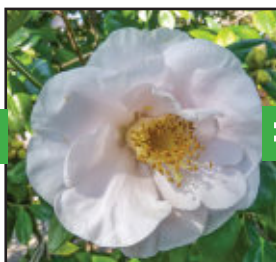
In 1973, they introduced 'LASCA Beauty' which has a very large, lovely soft pink semidouble flower. LASCA are the initials Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. It was awarded the Harris Hybrid Award in 1978. He crossed *C. reticulata* 'Cornelian' with *C. japonica* 'Mrs. D. W. Davis' to get 'LASCA Beauty'.



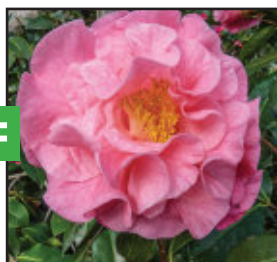
'DR. CLIFFORD PARKS'



X



=

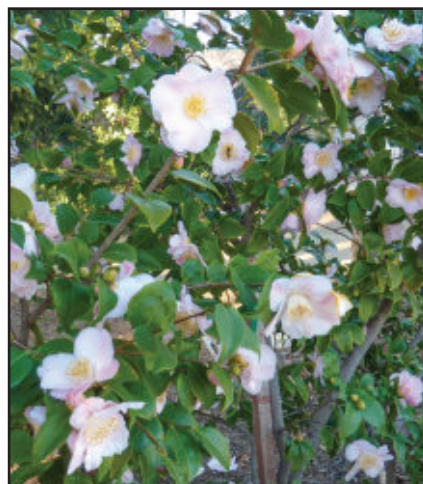


'CORNELIAN' X 'MRS. D. W. DAVIS' = 'LASCA BEAUTY'

Nonreticulata Hybrids

Dr. Parks also bred fragrant and yellow camellias. He and Longley introduced the fragrant 'Spring Mist' in 1981. It has a small semidouble blush pink to white flower. It blooms abundantly midseason with mildly sweet scented flowers.

He used *C. flava* in his yellow camellia breeding program seeking to produce yellow seedlings with more yellow than has been produced with *C. nitidissima*. In 2009, he registered



'SPRING MIST'



‘SOLSTICE’



‘OPTICAL ILLUSION’

‘Solstice’ which has a medium rose form light yellow flower.

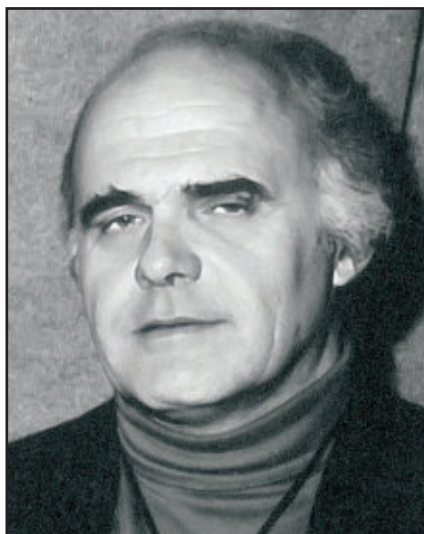
‘Optical Illusion’ was introduced in 2015 which was Dr. Parks’ last registered cultivar. The medium formal double flower has strap-like petals that form a spiral. The yellow flower has pink overtones usually on the outer petal edges which makes a beautiful bloom.

Camellia Species

Dr. Parks made several trips to China to observe and collect camellia species seeds. When they were propagated, this helped distribute camellia species to the USA. He donated many species to Massee Lane Gardens. He authored many camellia articles including *An Illustrated Guide to the Camellia Genus* which he coauthored with Gao and Du.

A Final Word

It has been said we die once when we take our last breath, and we die a second time when the last person speaks our name. This means that as long as Cliff’s camellias are grown, his spirit is still with us.



DR. CLIFFORD PARKS

INTRODUCTIONS

Flowers noted in blue can be viewed at www.americancamellias.com

JAPONICA

ADEYAKA — Bright Red. Small to medium, single. Vigorous, compact, upright growth. E—M. (1981)

APRIL BLUSH — Shell Pink. Medium to large, semidouble. Relatively slow growth. M. Cold hardy to nearly 0°F. (1995).

APRIL DAWN — White with a few Deep Pink streaks. Small to medium, formal double. Vigorous, upright growth. M-L. Cold hardy. (1993).

APRIL KISS — Pinkish Red. Small to medium, formal double. Slow to average, upright growth with heavy bud set. M. Cold hardy – Zone 6B. (Japonica ‘Berenice Boddy’ x Japonica ‘Reg Ragland’). (1995).

APRIL MELODY — Rose Red. Small, single. Strong growth. E. Very cold hardy. (2008).

APRIL PINK — Soft Pink. Large, formal double. Compact growth. M. Cold hardy to –9°. (2008).

APRIL REMEMBERED — Cream center to Pink shaded edges with Yellow anthers and Cream filaments. Medium to large, semidouble. Vigorous growth. E-L. Cold hardy to 0°F. (1995).

APRIL ROSE — Rose Red. Medium, formal double. L. Cold hardy. (1993).

APRIL SNOW — White. Medium to large, rose form double. Slow, compact growth. L. Cold hardy. (1993).

APRIL TRYST — Bright Red. Medium to large, anemone form. Average, upright growth. M. Cold hardy to nearly 0°F. (1995).

AUTUMN MIST — Pure White with Pink edges gradually fading to the center. Large, single. E-M. (2008).

CLASSIC PINK — Japonica -Pale Pink. Medium, formal double. L. Cold hardy.

OCTOBER AFFAIR — Light Pink with Deep Pink outer petals. Medium, formal double. Average, upright growth. E-M. (1981).

PINK PERFUME — Japonica — Watermelon Pink. Small to medium, semi-double. Average growth. M. (1976).

RED AURORA — Rich Red with a hint of Pink. Large, semidouble to rose form. M. Cold hardy.

RED JADE (PARKS) — Light Red. Small to medium, semidouble. M-L. Cold hardy to -9°.

SARAH CATHERINE — Pale Pink. Medium, semidouble. E-L. Cold hardy.

SPRING'S PROMISE — Rose Red. Small, single. Average, dense growth. E-M. Cold hardy. (1990).

STELLAR SUNRISE — Pink. Small to medium, formal double often with incurved petals. Vigorous, upright growth. M-L. Cold hardy. (2008).

TURANDOT — Medium Red. Large, peony form. M-L.

RETICULATA

ANNE McCULLOCH HILL — Intense Cerise Pink. Medium, rose form double. Average, upright growth. E. (1977).

BLUE TWILIGHT — Bluish Pink with Yellow anthers and Pinkish filaments. Large, semidouble with ruffled petals. Vigorous, open growth. M. (C. x williamsii 'William's Lavender' x Reticulata 'Cornelian'). (1965)

BUDDHA'S CHILD — Phlox Pink. Large, semidouble. Average, upright, compact growth. E—M. (Reticulata hybrid 'Buddha' x Sasanqua/Reticulata hybrid). (1981).

CHINA GIRL — Deep Pink. Large, semidouble. Average, upright, open growth. E-M. (Oleifera 'Narumi-Gata' x Reticulata 'Cornelian'). (1981).

CHRISTMAS EVE — Bright Pink. Large, semidouble with occasional rabbit ears. Vigorous growth. (Oleifera x Reticulata 'Cornelian').

CRIMSON CANDLES — Bright Rose Red. Small, single. Vigorous, upright growth. L. Cold hardy. (Reticulata x Fraterna seedling). (1995).

DOT SPENGLER — Spiraea Red. Small, semidouble to loose peony form. Average, spreading growth. E. (Sasanqua 'Crimson King' x Reticulata 'Lion Head'). (1977).

DR. CLIFFORD PARKS — Red with Orange cast. Very large, semidouble to anemone form to loose or full peony form. Vigorous growth. M. (Reticulata ‘Crimson Robe’ x Japonica ‘Kramer’s Supreme’). (1971).

DR. GORDON RICHMOND — Salmon Pink. Large, full semidouble to rose form double. Vigorous, upright, compact growth. M. (Reticulata ‘Cornelian’ x Japonica ‘Mrs. D. W. Davis’). (1983)

GLADYS PARKS — Rose Pink. Large, full semidouble to rose form double. Average, upright growth. (Reticulata ‘Crimson Robe’ x Japonica ‘Kramer’s Supreme’). (1983).

KAI MEI’S CHOICE — Brilliant Pink. Large, semidouble. Upright, narrow growth. E. ([Sasanqua x Sasanqua] x Reticulata). (1995).

LASCA BEAUTY — Soft Pink. Very large, semidouble with heavy textured thick petals. Vigorous, open, upright growth. M. (Reticulata ‘Cornelian’ x Japonica ‘Mrs. D. W. Davis’). (1973).

MOON FESTIVAL — Medium Pink. Very large, single. M. (Sasanqua x {Sasanqua x Reticulata hybrid})

PIXIE DUST — Dark Intense Pink with flared light-Yellow Anthers and light—Yellow filaments. Medium, single. Vigorous, upright growth; blooms do not shatter. E. Cold hardy to - 4 degrees. (Sasanqua ‘Mikunika’ x Reticulata hybrid ‘Kurenai’). (2016).

SCARLET TEMPTATION — Bright Rose Red with bright Yellow stamens. Large, single with ruffled petals. Erect, branching growth. M. Cold hardy. (Hybrid ‘William’s Lavender’ x Reticulata ‘Purple Gown’). (2008).

NONRETICULATA HYBRIDS

AUTUMN SPIRIT — Bright Deep Pink. Small to medium, peony form. Moderately vigorous, bushy growth. Cold hardy. (Oleifera x Sasanqua). (2008).

BALLET IN PINK — Orchid Pink. Large, peony form. Upright growth; profuse bloomer. (Saluenensis x Japonica ‘Kramer’s Supreme’). (2008).

CHRISTMAS ROSE — Rose Pink to Light Red. Unknown size, rose form double. M. (Williamsii x Sasanqua). (1988).

DR. RALPH WATKINS — Phlox Pink. Medium, loose peony form. Vigorous, compact, upright growth. L. (Saluenensis x Japonica ‘Princess Lavender’). (1977).

HARU-GASUMI — Rose Pink. Miniature, semidouble. E-M. (Japonica x Lutchuensis). (1981).

ISARIBI — Rose Pink. Miniature, semidouble. Vigorous, compact, upright growth. M-L. (Japonica 'Berenice Boddy' x other species). (1981).

JAPANESE FANTASY — White shading to Pink at tip of petals. Miniature, single. Vigorous, dense, upright growth. E. (Japonica 'Berenice Boddy' x Saluenensis/Rosaeflora). (1990).

LAVENDER PRINCE II — Rose Orchid Pink. Large, semidouble. Vigorous, open, upright growth. M-L. (Japonica 'Princess Lavender' x Hybrid 'William's Lavender'). (1981).

MASON FARM — White tinged with Pink. Large, unknown form. Vigorous growth: leaves are large, thick, and leathery. VE. Cold hardy. (Oleifera x Sasanqua). (1995).

MONAH JOHNSTONE — Light Pastel Pink. Large, semidouble. Open, upright growth. M-L. (Saluenensis x Japonica 'Princess Lavender'). (1980)

OPTICAL ILLUSION — Yellow with Pink overtones. Medium, formal double with strap-like petals that can be arranged in a somewhat spiral pattern. (Flava x Japonica). (2015).

PINK SERENADE — Bright Pink, Medium, single. (2008).

ROYAL INTRIGUE — Bright Orchid Red. Very large, semidouble. Vigorous, strong growth. L. (Japonica 'Princess Lavender' x Hybrid 'William's Lavender'). (1995).

SOLSTICE — Light Yellow. Medium, rose form double. Vigorous, upright growth with narrow Light Green leaves with long leaf tips. (Flava x Japonica). (2009).

SPRING AWAKENING — Pink. Miniature, semidouble to rose form double. Vigorous, open, upright growth. E-M. (Japonica 'Donckelarii' x Saluenensis/Rosaeflora). (1990).

SPRING MIST — Blush Pink. Miniature, semidouble. Vigorous, spreading growth. E-M. Fragrant. (Japonica Snow Bell' x Lutchuensis). (1982 - A. E. Longley and Parks).

SURVIVOR (PARKS) — White. Large, single. Upright, compact growth. Cold hardy to -9°F. (Oleifera 'Narumi-Gata x Oleifera'). (1988).

TWILIGHT GLOW — Rose. Unknown size, single. Compact, hardy growth. Cold hardy. (Oleifera x Sasanqua). (2008)

YOI MACHI — White margined Pink and occasionally marked Pink. Miniature, single. Average, compact, upright growth. E-M. (Oleifera 'Narumi-Gata' x Fraterna). (1981)

HIEMALIS

PINK GODDESS — Pink. Very large, single cup shaped.

WILLIAM LANIER HUNT — Dark Orchid Pink. Medium, peony form. M. (1986)

SASANQUA

AUTUMN SUN — Rose Red. Unknown size, semidouble. Upright, very compact dense growth. E-M.

AUTUMN SUNRISE — White with a Red tip on each petal. Large, single - cup-shaped. Vigorous, dense, and upright growth.

PINK SERENADE — Deep Pink. Large, single.





‘C.M. Hovey’

ESTATE GARDENS

Are Important In American

CAMELLIA HISTORY

BY BRADFORD KING

Camellia japonica was imported from England to America in 1797 by John Stevens of Hoboken, New Jersey, and became popular in the Northeast as greenhouse plants on large estates owned by the affluent. A good example is **The Lyman Estate** located in Waltham, Massachusetts. According to their website, it was established in 1793 by Theodore Lyman, a Boston merchant whose shipping company traded extensively in Asia. The Lyman family used it as a summer residence for 150 years. Today it is run by Historic New England, a nonprofit organization. The Camellia House was built around 1820 where today there are several camellias more than 100 years old. We have no doubt that Mr. Lyman, who grew fruit trees and had a greenhouse dedicated to them, knew Charles Mason Hovey (October 26, 1810 to 1887).

C.M. Hovey was an American nurseryman and author who was best known for his writing and propagation of fruit trees. According to Wikipedia, Charles and his brother Phineas started *Hovey & Co.*, a seed store and nursery



'PROFESSOR CHARLES S. SARGENT'

in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1832 which is less than ten miles from Waltham. He also collected ornamental plants, especially camellias. In the 1852 Hovey and Company seed catalogue, 102 camellia cultivars were listed. C.M. Hovey was responsible for breeding three camellia cultivars—'Mrs. Anne Hovey' in 1872 named for his wife, 'C. H. Hovey' in 1878 which is rarely seen today and 'C. M. Hovey' in 1883 which continues to be seen in



‘MRS. CHARLES COBB’



‘MARQUIS DE MONTCALM VAR.’

private and public gardens. It is also been known as ‘Colonel Firey.’

There is little doubt that Lyman and Hovey also knew Charles Sprague Sargent (April 24, 1841 – March 22, 1927), a botanist who was appointed in 1872 as the first director of Harvard University’s Arnold Arboretum in Boston, Massachusetts. He also was Director of The Cambridge Botanical Garden. Sargent was a Harvard University graduate and later became a professor of agriculture at Harvard. The camellia named ‘Professor Charles S. Sargent’ was named for him by Magnolia Gardens in 1925.

The gardens at **Magnolia Plantation** began in the late 17th century. The cultivation of rice made the Drayton family immensely wealthy. John Grimké Drayton received word that his older Thomas died from a gunshot during a deer hunt. John found himself a wealthy plantation owner at the age of 22 but wished to continue to prepare to be a minister. In 1838, he entered the Episcopal seminary in New York. While there, he fell in love with and married Julia Ewing. John contracted tuberculosis and found his own cure for the illness was working outside in the gardens. He loved gardening and wanted to create a romantic garden for his wife to make her feel more at home in the lowlands of South Carolina. A few years later his health returned, allowing him to enter the ministry as rector of nearby Saint Andrews Church and to devote himself to the enhancement of the plantation garden. He concentrated on building *Azalea indica* and *Camellia japonica* collections. Today the collection contains 20,000 camellias, including 1,000 *C. japonica* cultivars, a large heirloom camellia collection and a hybrid collection of reticulatas and other hybrids. Magnolia is an International Camellia



‘MATHOTIANA’



‘GIGANTEA’

Garden of Excellence. A few examples of the over 150 *C. japonica* cultivars introduced by Magnolia are ‘Mrs. Charles Cobb,’ ‘Marquis de Montcalm Variegated’ and ‘Professor Charles S. Sargent.’ In addition, numerous quality cultivars were imported from Europe as early as the 1840s which are illustrated here by ‘Gigantea’ and ‘Mathotiana.’

Edward Avery McIlhenny was born in 1872 on Avery Island in Louisiana. He was the second son of Edmund McIlhenny who invented Tabasco sauce. As a boy growing up on Avery Island, Edward acquired a love for na-



‘VEDRINE’



‘SHOWA-NO-SAKAE’

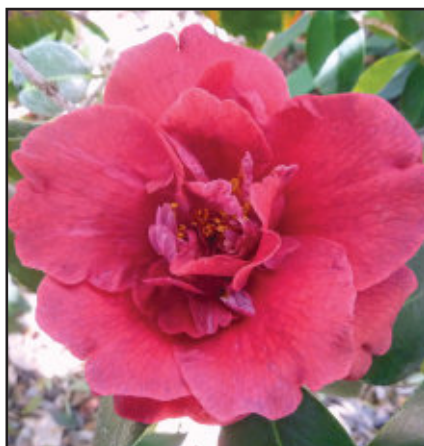
ture. He attended Lehigh University in Pennsylvania and went on two Arctic expeditions in 1894 and 1897 before returning in 1898 to Avery Island where he created a 170-acre botanical garden and bird sanctuary called **Jungle Gardens**. Azaleas, papyrus, camellias and other exotic botanical treasures were planted.

In the early 1900s, he moved mature camellia trees from local towns and plantations to Avery Island to serve as a central feature of the camellia collection. This is illustrated by ‘Vedrine’ which was propagated from an old unlabeled specimen at Vedrine, Louisiana, and named by Mrs. Mary Swards Debaillon. It was introduced in 1935 by McIlhenny. The bright red medium to large anemone to loose peony flower is eye-catching.

From 1929 through 1938, Edward imported thousands of camellias from nurseries in England, Germany, Holland, France and Japan. A

list of his importations can be found in the 1950 Camellia Yearbook.

The Japanese *C. sasanqua* he brought to America are noteworthy. One that continues to be very popular is ‘Showa-no-sakae’ (Glory of the Showa Era). It has a soft pink flower with occasional white marbling and a musky fragrance. It is small to medium in size and its form is semidouble to rose form double. It blooms early season. It makes a good ground cover or landscape



‘ST. ANDRE’

plant as it is a vigorous low growing compact plant. It was first imported by McIlhenny from Japan in 1935.

The importations from Europe were the best japonica cultivars that could be located. This included 'Marchioness of Exeter,' 'Nobilsima,' 'St. Andre' and 'Comet de Nesselrode' among many others. Edward is credited with introducing 'Comet de Nesselrode' to America in 1937. This cultivar dates to 1872 in Europe and is named for a Russian diplomat. The camellia has a large pink flower tipped and edged in white. He is also credited with being the first to introduce the bright red medium semidouble flower of 'St. Andre' to the States. While not necessarily the first to introduce all the cultivars he imported, he propagated and placed them on the market when enough stock was available. This was an invaluable help to other camellia collectors and helped stimulate camellia popularity in America.

Edward also grew thousands of camellia seedlings every year for 40 years enabling him to introduce many new cultivars most of which are no longer frequently seen or propagated. A few examples are 'Red Velvet,' 'Amazing' and 'Anne Brown.'

The three estate gardens discussed here illustrate the important contribution they made in bringing camellias to America. They were instrumental in propagating and distributing many wonderful cultivars which helped make camellias a popular landscape plant.





‘WENQING’

Summer Reblooming Hybrids FROM CHINA

ARTICLE BY BRADFORD KING
AND PHOTOS COURTESY OF GAO JIYIN

The American Camellia Society arranged to have ten of the “best” *C. azalea* hybrid cuttings shipped to America in July 2019. They are the result of an extensive breeding program by the Palm Landscape Architectural Company. Twenty of each variety was shipped to Joseph Foster, Director of the USDA Plant Germplasm Quarantine Program in Maryland, to begin a two-year required quarantine.

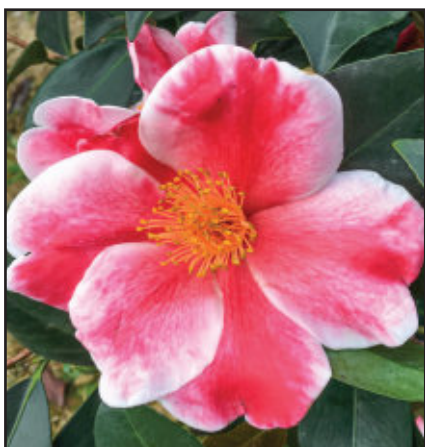
The Back Story

Gao Ji Yin, chief editor of *The Illustrations of the New Camellia Hybrids that Bloom Year-round*, reported there are 212 interspecific hybrids from 52 cross combinations of *C. azalea* introduced after ten years of observation and cultivation. They were selected from more than 5,000 hybrid seedlings all with the characteristic of year-round blooming with dark green foliage and vigorous growth. He selected the “best” ten to be sent to America.

The friendship between Gao and ACS began at the Norfolk Convention in 2011 with Celeste Richard, Executive Director of ACS, and Brad King, Editor of the ACS Journal and Camellia Yearbook. Prior to that, email was their means of communication. Brad King gave the keynote address touting the breeding potential of *C. azalea*. Gao Ji Yin was invited by Celeste Richard to also address the convention. He discussed the importance of native camellia species in China



BRADFORD KING AND GAO JIYIN



‘SIJI XIUMEI’



‘HONGWU JIXIZNAG’



‘HONGLONG WUTIAN’

highlighting *C. azalea*. Communication continued over the years including the ICS Convention in Brittany, France, which included a paper discussing additional new *C. azalea* hybrids. When it became clear that *C. azalea* hybrids were available the summer of 2019, Mark Crawford, ACS board member and chair of the Horticultural Committee, made the shipping arrangements from China to the USDA Quarantine Program.

The *C. azalea* Hybrids

English names are followed by their Chinese names which are not necessarily the valid trademark names. Some of the cultivars have not yet been trademarked. When these hybrids are sold in the future, they may be given marketing names.

The descriptions that follow are from *The Illustrations of the New*



‘GUICHANG XIANSHENG’



‘RELANG’

Camellia Hybrids that Bloom Year-round which Gao Jiyin signed “To Dr. Bradford King, I hope you enjoy this book.” Please note that since these plants have not yet been grown and evaluated in America, the blooming periods and flowers may vary from the descriptions below.

1. ‘Four Season of Beauty’ (‘Siji Xiumei’) is a cross between *C. azalea* and ‘Tama Beauty.’ The light red to red medium to large single flower has a fine white border. The petal surfaces are slightly wrinkled. It begins to bloom in late summer, peaking in autumn and winter but blooms sporadically in spring.

2. ‘Four Season Scent’ (Hongwu Jixiznag) is a cross between *C. azalea* and ‘Kramer’s Supreme.’ The flower has a scented bright red semidouble to peony medium to large bloom. It blooms in summer, fall and winter but sporadically in the spring.

3. ‘Honglong Wutian’ is a cross between *C. azalea* and ‘Huangpu Zhilang’ which is a cross between ‘Royal Velvet’ and ‘Tiffany.’ This is a new hybrid not included in the book edited by Gao.

4. ‘Guichang Xiansheng’ is a cross between *C. azalea* and ‘Bob Hope.’ The flower is a medium to large semidouble to peony with a red to dark red



8. 'Xiaoxuan' ('Xiamen Xiaoxuan') is a cross between *C. azalea* and 'Daikagura.' There is no patent name but the name translates to 'Miss Xiaoxuan's Summer Dream.' The rose form double to formal double is a deep pink with occasionally a slight purplish tone on the petal surfaces and several fine stripes. The plant is compact, dense and grows vigorously. It begins to bloom late summer and fully in the fall to winter but only occasionally in spring.

9. 'Yueting Summer Dream' ('Xianmeng Yueting') is a cross between 'Colletii' and *C. azalea*. The medium rose form double flower is light red to red sometimes with blotches or white stripes. It begins to bloom in the summer and continues fall into winter but sporadically in spring.

10. 'Breeze Lotus' (Quyuan Fenghe) is a back cross between *C. azalea* and *C. azalea* hybrid 'Xiari Taige.' The medium semidouble to peony flower is red with occasionally white misty patches. The plant



'WENQING'



‘QUYUAN FENGHE’

ed, “We have multiple rooted cuttings of each of the 10 selections imported in 2019. Unfortunately, there are no cuttings in bloom at this time, because I deliberately pinch off the flowers to conserve the energy of each cutting. These rooted cuttings will be released to the American Camellia Society in July 2021.”

is a compact dwarf that grows vigorously and blooms all year but only occasionally in spring.

Progress Report

Mark Crawford reports that in January 2020 the cuttings have rooted and were transplanted into individual containers.

In September, Joseph Foster, Director of the USDA Plant Germplasm Quarantine Program, reported,



‘YUETING’ XIANMENG YUETING