

*Southern California
Camellia Society
The Camellia Review*



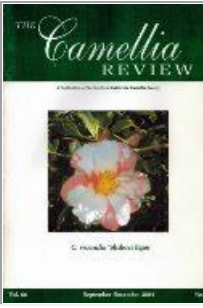
BRADFORD KING ARTICLES



1996 – 2005



C. reticulata 'Jim Smelley'

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NEW CAMELLIAS FROM NUCCIO'S NURSERY

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

As a child living in New England, my grandfather, father and I would read seed catalogues as we sat by the cozy fire while the harsh winter raged outside our farm house doors. Gram would be baking tasty pies. My mother along with my younger sister and brother would be playing board games to while away the time. There was no TV in those days to occupy the endless hours while we waited for winter to pass. Yet we were all hopeful, discussing and planning ahead for the spring planting of seeds and summer gardening ahead.

I miss those times! Gone, too, is the yearly/annual arrival of the Nuccio's Nursery catalogue. The last one published was 2003-2004. In that year 'Coral Bouquet', 'Hot Shot', 'Nuccio's Bella Rosa Variegated' and 'Frank Houser Variegated' were introduced as new offerings to their vast collection. While the Nuccio's will produce a new catalogue sometime in the future, this article will catch you up on what they have introduced since that publication. Four japonicas, one sasanqua and one specie are new.

Japonicas

'Red Tulip' is a lovely dark red tulip-shaped, small to medium single bloom that darkens at the edges. The yellow stamens cluster tightly in the center. The dark red petals and yellow stamens contrast nicely with the dark green foliage. When I first saw it there was no name provided, so I thought of it as 'Nuccio's Dark Red Tulip'.

'White Bouquet' is another new japonica. The bloom is large to medium and semi-double in form. The color is white with touches of blush. The buds are pink. The golden stamens contrast with the white blush-rounded petals. The bloom is hose in hose making it a clean attractive flower.

'Aoi Sangosyo' is a small cup-shaped single bloom in a toned lavender red with darker purple veined petals. The overall effect is a pleasing lavender colored flower with a textured appearance. It is a medium to late season blooming Japonica.

'Red Devil' is a small dark red tubular-shaped bloom with pointed petals. It is a late blooming semi-double. It is a cousin of 'Red Hots'. The flower is smaller and a darker red with deeply creased pointed petals that bloom later than 'Red Hots'. It sets seeds more proficiently than 'Red Hots'. Tom Nuccio describes it as "one of the most striking seed pods" as it has a beautiful purple hue when mature. I have left several pods on my plant to enjoy watching this summer.

Sasanquas

The new sasanqua is called 'Old Glory'. According to Tom Nuccio the flower reminded the Nuccio family of a "waving American flag"—thus the name 'Old Glory'.

This medium bloom (3" diameter) is white with a beautiful rose pink border on lovely wavy petals. The plant is an upright and bushy in its growth habit.

Species

The Nuccio's are very enthusiastic about the development of fragrant camellias and azaleas. Jude Nuccios' eyes light up when he describes his version of a mass planting of fragrant blooming azaleas. Tom Nuccio energetically discussed and showed me their stock of *C. grijsii*. It is reported that this species was found in 1861 in China's Fujian Province by C.F. deGrijis, thus its name. The plant is an upright and medium growth in habit. The leaves are small, narrow and leathery in texture. The blooms are profuse. It is a mid-season flat single white with a cluster of upright

stamens. The flower has a nice fragrance. A mass landscape planting makes an attractive and fragrant display.

Nuccio's Nursery is introducing what they call 'Grijsii Select'. It is fragrant with darker foliage and has serrated leaves. The bloom is a small (2" diameter) single white with thicker more broad petals than other *C. grijsii* seedlings.

What will the future bring? Presently, the Nuccios are propagating new seedlings of japonicas,

sasanquas, reticulatas and other camellia species. Two species, *C. amplexicaulis* and *C. azalea* are expected to be offered for sale to the general public within the next few years. These species offer great potential to hybridizers to extend the length of the camellia blooming season.

As I look in my crystal ball I see a fragrant large red camellia with a picoteed border that blooms year round. What do you see?

HIGO CAMELLIAS

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

The Higo camellia is a strain of Japonica with some camellia rusticania in its background. Higo's are distinguished by their 100 to 250 stamens that flare out to form a central sunburst. The classic bloom is a single with 5 to 9 large petals, which are asymmetrical with a dense center of beautiful long stamens that spread out like the spikes of a wheel. In Japan the irregular form is an asset because it serves to emphasize the symmetry of the striking stamens. The flower color is always bright and pure. Blooms may be white to pink, cream, scarlet, red and in varieties of these tonal combinations. A Japanese gardener first described the Higo Camellia in 1829. Priests and the Samurais did the original propagation. The Samurais are the noblemen warriors of old Japan who devoted themselves to the arts, gardening and scholarly activities. They hybridized Camellias to please their masters and the Emperor. Devotion to their masters, 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 wide spread in the Kumamoto region of Japan. The Higo peaked from 1826 to 1860 with as many as 100 cultivars. Unfortunately, the Japanese Civil War of 1877 and the two World Wars destroyed many of the Japanese camellias.

However, 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. Higo is the ancient name of the city of Kumamoto, which is on the island of Kyushu in the south of Japan. The traditional way to grow Higo's is as a bonsai. A scion of the desired Higo is grafted on a wild Camellia root and placed in a beautiful pot. The old gnarled root gives the effect of age to the bonsai. The bonsai is best displayed when the plant is two feet by two feet to show the trunk, bark, leaves and blooms to best advantage.

Higo also make excellent landscape plants and do very well in pots where their full height and width can be appreciated. Higo culture is identical as any other Japonica cultivars. They are clearly not a separate species.

Higo's are not frequently grown in the United States perhaps because the uneven single blooms are not appreciated. The few times they have been entered in our society shows they haven't competed well with other Japonicas. Most would be placed in the small or medium classes. Personally, I enjoy them and have added them to my collection. In order to save space and exercise some artistic yearning, I have begun creating bonsai. Bonsai take more care than camellias in the ground, but it's worth the effort to watch the buds swell, the flower bloom and the plant grow and even occasionally set a seedpod. The parts of the plant are normal size but the total package is just right for up close viewing. They are excellent for people who live in apartments or condos. They fit perfectly on a patio or shady nook in any size garden.

In closing, I recommend Higo's as another enjoyable way to expand your camellia hobby.

~*~*~

The gardening bug can bite at any moment.
—Barbara Damrosch

THE BEST OF THE BEST, PART II

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

In Part I of "The Best of the Best" landscape sasanquas and japonica camellias were discussed. In Part II the best non-reticulata hybrid, *reticulata*, bonsai, foliage, fragrant, yellow and espalier camellias will be highlighted.

The camellia is unusual among garden flowers in that, for the most part, its cultivars are derived from a single species such as *C. japonica*, *C. reticulata*, or *C. sasanqua*. However, J.C. Williams began hybridizing between species in England in the 1930's.

These new cultivars were crosses between *C. japonicas* and *C. saluenensis* and were generally divided into two categories—one with *reticulata* parentage and those with "other than" *reticulata* parentage. This latter category is referred to as non-*reticulata* hybrids. My recommendations of the best six of this category are listed below.

Non-Reticulata Hybrids

1. 'Angel Wings' is a lovely white shaded to orchid pink. The semi-double bloom has irregular upright petals with yellow stamens. The compact shrub is a *C. japonica* 'Dr. Tinsley' x *C. saluenensis*.

2. 'Anticipation Variegated' is a medium to large peony form bloom. It is deep rose with mottled white. The shrub grows tall and upright. Les Jury hybridized it in 1962 with *C. saluenensis* x *C. japonica* 'Leviathan'.

3. 'Freedom Bell' is a bright red bell-shaped semi-double. It is small to medium and blooms early to midseason. The shrub is a fast growing upright with dense dark green leaves. It is a Nuccio's Nursery introduction of unknown parentage.

4. 'Nicky Crisp' is a light orchid pink. This medium to large semi-double blooms mid to late season. The shrub grows slowly and compactly. It is a *C. pitardii* x *C. pitardii japonica*

seedling.

5. 'Spring Daze' is a small to medium formal to rose form. It is blush pink with a coral-pink edge. It flowers mid to late season on a bushy upright plant.

6. 'Waltz Time Variegated' is a lilac pink blotched with white. It is a medium semi-double flower. The shrub grows on a vigorous bushy upright plant.

If there were one possible addition that could be added to this list it would have to be 'Buttons 'N Bows', a small light pink formal double shading to deeper pink at the edge. The shrub is compact and bushy.

Ralph Peer and Descanso Gardens imported the Yunnan *C. reticulatas* from China to the United States in 1948. The offspring of these cultivars are listed as hybrids with *C. reticulata* parentage. My varietal recommendations for this species follows.

Camellia Reticulata Hybrids

1. 'Dr. Clifford Parks' is a very large semi-double to anemone to full peony form in a lovely rich red. The shrub is a vigorous grower. It is a *C. reticulata* 'Crimson Robe' x *C. japonica* 'Kramers Supreme'.

2. 'Frank Houser' is a very large rose-red with "rabbit-ears." It is a semi-double or loose peony form. The shrub is outstanding and grows in an upright habit. The variegated form is also a good cultivar to add to ones collection. Its parentage is *C. reticulata* 'Buddha' x *C. japonica* 'Steve Blount'.

3. 'Harold L. Paige' is an outstanding very large, bright red peony form with ruffled petals. It also may flower as a rose form double. It is a cross between *C. reticulata* 'Crimson Robe' and *C. japonica* 'Adolphe Audusson'. It is a late season bloomer and takes gib well.

4. 'John Hunt' is an excellent very large pink semi-double to loose peony form with veined petals. It blooms

mid to late season and is a good candidate for gib. It is a cross of *C. reticulata* hybrid 'Arch of Triumph' x *C. reticulata* hybrid 'LASCA Beauty'.

5. 'Larry Piet', a rich dark red large to very large bloom opens in rose form double to peony form. The shrub is vigorous, compact and upright in growth and is a cross between *C. reticulata* 'Pharaoh' x *C. reticulata* hybrid 'Harold L. Paige'.

6. 'LASCA Beauty' is a very large semi double soft pink. The bloom has texture and thick petals. This cultivar is a vigorous upright grower. The parents are *C. reticulata*. 'Cornelian' x *C. japonica*. 'Mrs. D.W. Davis'.

7. 'Valley Knudsen' is a deep orchid pink. It is a large semi-double to loose peony bloom.. The shrub is vigorous and grows in an upright compact manner. This is a *C. saluenensis* x *C. reticulata* 'Buddha' cross.

8. 'Ruta Hagmann' is a light blush coral pink and is a lovely very large peony flower. The shrub is of average growth in open, spreading upright style. It is a seedling of *C. reticulata* 'Curtain Call'.

If you are interested in showing flowers, 'Emma Gaeta Variegated' is a must! The gangly open upright growth is not advised for landscaping, but the deep rose-red blotched white bloom is an excellent show flower.

Best Camellias for Bonsai

The Higo camellias family consists of 70 *C. japonica* cultivars that are distinguished by their stamens. They generally have numerous stamens that flare to form a central sunburst. While they may be grown as landscape plants, the standard way to grow Higo camellias is as a bonsai. My recommendations for Higo camellias to bonsai are as follows:

1. 'Hi-No-Maru' is a large red cultivar with 120 stamens and glossy foliage. The plant is upright and its slow growth makes it an excellent choice to bonsai.

2. 'Gosho-Zakura' blooms

profusely over a long season. The pale pink flower shades to cream and, with its up to 120 stamens, is impressive. The shrub is vigorous in growth and the foliage is lovely.

3. 'Jitsu-getsu-sei' is a medium bloom with 150 cream stamens. Flowers are crimson red with a range of white blotches. The name means "sun, moon and stars." The crimson represents the sun, the stamens the moon, and the white blotches the stars.

4. 'Shiranui' is a medium rose red bloom with wavy single petals and flared stamens. It grows upright and compact.

5. 'Shira Yuki' is a medium single white flower with heavy flared golden stamens. The shrub has an upright growth habit and is second to 'Fuji' as a favorite white Higo in Japan.

My picks for best foliage camellias to bonsai are:

1. 'Egao Corkscrew' has ruffled pink petals in a loose peony form. The plant has a distinctive zigzag growth that makes it an excellent choice to bonsai.

2. 'Ginyo Tsubaki' is a red single tubular shaped flower. The small light gray-green foliage with narrow dark-green serrated margins is unusual and makes an attractive bonsai. It is slow, compact and upright in growth habit.

3. 'Shibori Egao Corkscrew' is the variegated form of 'Egao Corkscrew'. It has the zigzag growth with white markings on the pink flower.

Best Fragrant Camellia

'High Fragrance' is a lovely pale ivory-pink in a peony to loose peony form. It is a non-reticulata hybrid. The shrub is fast growing, open with green foliage. There are other more fragrant camellias but the blooms are small and unimpressive.

Best Yellow Camellia

While there are certainly more yellow flowering camellias than 'Dahlohnega', they tend to be small single flowers. This small formal

double cultivar has creamy-white to pale yellow flowers and blooms mid to late season. This upright compact slow grower has dark green foliage against lovely gray bark. 'Dahlohnega' is my pick because it not only looks great in the landscape, but the blooms can win at shows as small japonicas or in the "best yellow" class. As a late bloomer it is a good candidate to gib.

Best Camellias for Espalier

'Anticipation' is a medium to large non-reticulata hybrid with deep rose peony form flowers. The shrub is vigorous and grows upright.

'Bert Jones' is a *C. sasanqua* with fragrant pink flowers. Its strong whip-

like growth habit makes it a good choice to espalier.

Conclusion

Is there one grand prizewinner for best camellia? Everyone you ask has his or her own opinion! Paul Jones, arguably the best camellia painter, picked 'Nuccio's Gem'. *Sunset Magazine* stated that 'Guilio Nuccio' "is the best red camellia to date.". The late Marion and Milt Schmidt chose 'Eleanor Martin Supreme' after they won "Best of Show" with it. "Best of the Best" is certainly chosen by "the eye of the beholder." As for me, my favorite is always the one I just picked that stood up and looked back at me!

The garden is a love song,
a duet between a human being
and Mother Nature.



Return to TOC

THE BEST OF THE BEST (Part I)

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

Part I of "The Best of the Best" will discuss the "best" landscape and show camellias. Part II in a later issue; will deal with the "best" non-reticulata hybrids, reticulatas, bonsai, fragrant, yellow and espalier camellia's.

There are a number of frequently asked questions about camellias. What is your favorite camellia? What camellias should I use to landscape? What camellias are best to grow if I want to win at a show that are also good for landscaping? Which cultivars will grow in sun? All are good questions and each requires a particular answer.

Best Camellias for Landscaping

If the location is full sun a western or southern exposure in the open sun, growers tend toward sasanquas. For the purpose of this article I am including species vernalis and heimalis as sasanqua's. Thus, my ten recommendations for landscaping in full sun listed alphabetically:

'Bonanza' is deep red, large in a semi-peony form. It is a low medium grower. It received the 1965 Ralph Peer seedling award.

'Bert Jones' is a silvery pink, large semi-double. The flower is very fragrant. It is a strong grower with dark shiny foliage. It is a good candidate for espalier.

'Dazzler' is a brilliant rose-red with golden stamens. It is a semi-double with wavy petals. It flowers early on a tall vigorous plant.

'Double Rainbow' is rose-colored with a white border. It has a medium growth habitat. A single plant makes a striking show.

'Egao' is a large semi-double pink with a column of yellow stamens. It is an upright vigorous grower with some ability to spread out. It received the Ralph S. Peer Sasanqua Seedling Award in 1989.

'Kanjiro' is a brilliant rose-red semi-double. It is a tall bushy shaped plant that grows vigorously. The foliage is dark and glossy. It is good as a specimen or hedge. It is a favorite understock used for grafting. It received the Ralph S. Peer Sasanqua seedling award in 2000.

'Showa-No-Sakae' is a semi-double pink. The plant grows vigorously and maintains a low growth pattern. A hedge of 3, 5, or 7 is

an impressive grouping.

'Shishi Gashira' is a profuse grower with bright rose-red double flowers with shiny dark foliage make a great single specimen or hedge. It is a candidate for espalier. It received the Ralph S. Peer Sasanqua Award in 1991.

'Yuletide' is a brilliant red single with bright yellow stamens. It grows upright with dense foliage with a profusion of flowers over a long period. It received the Ralph S. Peer Sasanqua Seedling Award in 1974.

'Dwarf-Shishi' is a good candidate for a low growing hedge or space under a low window. The bloom is a small bright-red semi-double. It is a very compact low grower with small leaves. It is a 'Shishi-Gashira' seedling.

Best Sasanqua for Camellia Shows

This list includes 'Egao', 'Kanjero', 'Shishi-Gashira', 'Dwarf-Shishi' and 'Yuletide' (all described above). Three additional plants are recommended to show as blossoms as they have successfully placed well at camellia shows.

'Grady's Egao' is a sport of 'Egao' and was discovered by Grady Peregán. It has a light pink vein with a fine white edged flower. It grows well, but is more compact than its sire.

'Shibori Egao' is the variegated form of 'Egao'. The flower is a pink blotched white. The bloom is smaller than 'Egao', but is a striking beauty. As a variegated cultivar it is not as robust as its parent and forms a bushier plant.

'Star Above Star' is white shading to lavender pink at the edge. It is a medium semi-double in the form of one star shape superimposed on another star. This shrub is upright and bushy with green foliage. In 1969 it received the Ralph S. Peer Sasanqua Seedling Award.

Best Camellias for Shade Landscape

Shade is a relative term. Most camellias will survive even in heavy shade but will not bloom. Partial sun

such as a northern or eastern exposure is optimal. The use of shade cloth, lath or a pergola of 50% is also excellent for a western or southern exposure. Camellias also grow well under trees as long as there is partial sun or a bright exposure.

What are the best camellias for landscaping in partial sun? A flip but accurate response is "any *Camellia Japonica*". The foliage is dark green all year long and flowers during the winter months. The grower picks his or her favorite bloom size, color and form from the hundreds available.

There are many cultivars around older homes that look great all year and will continue to do so for years to come. For example, how can one go wrong with 'Pink Perfection'? It is a small formal double pink bloom. There is one over 100 years old on the west walk on the North Vista at the Huntington Gardens. If one prefers a medium peony form pink flower, 'Debutante' is another excellent choice. A drive through Pasadena streets will afford you many opportunities to spot these in older established gardens. If you walk through Descanso Gardens you will see numerous red and white flowers identified as 'Darkogura', 'Herme', also found in abundance, is a salmon pink bordered with white bloom that is streaked with scarlet. But, if you want the best cultivars for landscaping and to show, the following are my recommendations.

Camellia Japonica Small Blooms:

'Grace Albrighton' is pale pink and shades to darker pink at the edges. It is a formal double with perfectly overlapping petals. It blooms midseason on a shrub that is upright in growth habit.

2 'Hishi Karito' is pink with white petaloids in the middle. It is a semi-double flower snf uniform in size and color. It's a good candidate for trays of multiple blooms.

'Maroon and Gold' is a deep maroon with darker markings on the

petal edges. The golden stamens top off the loose peony form. The growth is average and upright in habit. Since it flowers mid-to-late season, it's a good candidate to gib and takes it well.

'Red Hots' is a brilliant red, tubular semi-double. It blooms early to late season. The shrub has lovely dark green foliage and grows upright in a somewhat columnar shape. It is a striking plant with red flowers and dark green leaves.

'Tama-No-Ura' is bright red with a heavy white border. It is a single flower with six petals. It also blooms profusely in early to midseason. It is the seed plant of at least nine picoteed cultivars. The shrub grows rapidly in an open upright style with slender branches.

'Tama Peacock' is maroon with a wide white border in a tubular semi-double form. It blooms well, but not as profusely as its seed parent. It, too, sets seeds easily. The seedpods are an attractive bronze color. This is the best seedling to date produced out of 'Tama-No-Ura'. Its growth habit is like its sire but more pendulous.

Camellia Japonica Medium Blooms

'Firedance Variegated' is fire-red blotched with white. The flower is a semi-double bloom slightly tubular in form. It blooms in midseason. The shrub is upright in growth habit. It is a frequent winner at shows.

'Grand Marshal' is a deep dark red medium to large in size. It flowers in peony to anemone form. The shrub has glossy green foliage and is a strong grower in upright habit.

'Margaret Davis' is a beautiful picoteed white to creamy white dashed and edged vermillion. It flowers midseason on a medium bushy shrub that has an upright growth pattern.

'Nuccio's Carousel' is a medium to large with soft pink tones up to a deeper pink at the edges. It is a tubular semi-double in form. It is an average grower in a compact style. It can win

as a single bloom or in trays of like blooms.

'Nuccio's Gem' is a white formal double with a spiral pattern to the petals. It is medium to large in size. The shrub is vigorous compact and upright in growth habit.

'Wildfire' is a brilliant orange-red with an iridescent finish. It is a semi-double flower with a 'hose in hose' style around gold stamens. It is an early to midseason bloomer and will set seeds. It gets compliments from garden visitors and wins crystal at shows. It is a good candidate for trays of like blooms.

Landscaping with one or two of the above cultivars can provide a spectacular show. For example, my friend Will MacArthur has chosen to landscape his front yard with a double row of camellias up against his house. The back five plants are 'Grand Marshal' and the front five are 'Nuccio's Gem'. The plants are green all year but offer an outstanding display of red and white during the winter months.

Camellia Japonica Large Blooms:

'Carter's Sunburst' is a large to very large pale pink marked with deeper pink. It comes in semi-double, peony or formal double. Its flowering season is early to late. The shrub is bushy and upright in growth habit.

'Grand Prix' is a five-inch brilliant red on an irregular semi-double form. It blooms midseason on an upright and vigorous shrub. It is striking in the garden, on the show table, or display in a vase as a flowering branch. It is capable of winning as a single blossom or in a tray of like blooms either natural or treated.

'Katie' is a very large stylish semi-double coral-rose pink. The flower is beautiful whether natural or treated used in the landscape or at a show. The shrub grows very well in an upright and bushy form. The variegated form is also an excellent choice.

'Miss Charleston Variegated' is a deep red boom with moiré or white

blotches and flowers mid to late season. This semi-double with its high center to formal double is a very attractive flower. This cultivar takes well to being gibbed. The shrub is upright in growth habit.

'Tomorrow Park Hill' is the peerless sport of 'Tomorrow Variegated' is a soft light pink with deeper pink on the edges and white variegation. The flower is large to very large. Ralph Peer discovered it in 1963 on his Park Hill estate in California.

'Royal Velve' is a dark red semi-double bloom with a velvety appearance. It is a show-stopper in the garden and on the show table. The shrub is upright, compact and rapid in its growth habit.

Best Camellias for Hedges or Mass Plantings

'Covina' is a rose-red japonica with semi-double to rose form double flower. blooms profusely and is able to thrive in full sun.

'Dwarf Shishi-Gashira', a sasanqua with a rose-red bloom, is great for partial sun or shade for areas requiring low growth. It is an excellent candidate for under low windows or for a flowering ground cover. The Huntington Gardens has used it liberally near the Japanese Garden.

'Shishi-Gashira' is a sasanqua that looks great as a single specimen or in mass plantings. It has beautiful foliage, profuse blooms and maintains its shape with minimal pruning. It is low growing—4 to 5 feet—and grows compactly.

'Slim n' Trim' is a sasanqua for areas of limited width as it has a very tight columnar growth habit. The flower is a single deep rose pink.

'Yuletide' is a sasanqua with sturdy compact and upright growth

habit and flowers during the holiday season. The bloom is a single bright red with yellow stamens. The Alumni House on the University of Southern California campus has plantings of Yuletide on three sides of the building and used 'Showa-No-Sakae' in the foreground.

In conclusion, when you want "the best of the best" to landscape and/or for showa my "picks" by size and color are as follows:

Sasanqua

Red	'Yuletide'
Pink	'Egao'
Red/white	'Double Rainbow'
White	No recommendation

Japonica Small

Red	'Red Hots'
Pink	'Pink Perfection'
Red/white:	'Tama Peacock'
White:	'Man Size'

Japonica Medium

Red	'Wildfire'
Pink	'Nuccio's Carousel'
Red/white	'Firedance Variegated'
White	'Nuccio's Gem'

Japonica Large/Very Large

Red	'Royal Velvet'
Pink	'Carter's Sunburst'
Red/white:	'Miss Charleston Var.'
White:	'Junior Prom'

Camellias are also excellent container plants for use on patios, decks and to fill in a vacant spot whether you live in a terraced apartment or house with a small yard. When all plants have finished their blooming, the camellia begins its display. The sasanquas start their show in September and continue into January. The japonicas are on display from Thanksgiving into Spring. The camellia is certainly the winter jewel of the flower world!

Man is happy in a garden because God has made him so
and to live in a garden is the nearest
he can reach to paradise on earth.
—Nan Fairbrother

THE BIRDS AND BEES: SEEDS AND SEEDLINGS

Bradford D. King
Arcadia, California

The propagation of camellias by seed is very enjoyable and interesting. As you know seeds do not produce an exact replica of their parents. This may be irrelevant when your goal is to grow understock. In this case it is helpful to know if the seeds are *aasanqua*, *japonica*, *eeticulata* or other species. However, camellia parentage is a major consideration for hybridizing. The shrub that produces the seed is called the "seed parent". The shrub that produces the pollen is the "pollen parent". A "chance seedling" is from a seed whose parentage is unknown. The term a "chance seedling" of 'Tama-no-ura' indicates that the seed parent is 'Tama-no-ura' e.g. 'Merry Christmas'. The pollen parent is unknown. There are numerous wonderful cultivars that are chance seedlings, e.g. 'Bob Hope', 'Grand Prix' and 'Nuccio's Gem'. They are the work of the birds and bees. The hummingbirds and bees love camellia flowers and transfer pollen from bloom to bloom in their search for nectar. It is generally believed that camellias are not self pollinating.

To a grower like myself, hybridizing camellias is most fascinating when a "controlled cross" is made. The pollen from a known cultivar is intentionally collected and placed on the pistil of another known cultivar. I pick a fresh flower and place it on a paper towel for 4 to 24 hours in a cool dark place away from all insects so that the pollen dries and isn't contaminated by a visit from a local bee who could have pollen from another source. When a dry warm day arrives, I emasculate a bud that is almost ready to open on the chosen seed parent. All flower petals and stamens are carefully cut off with a small pair of scissors. The pistil and calyx are left intact. The pistil is located in the center of most blooms and is usually yellow green or white

as opposed to the golden yellow color of the anthers. Fresh dry pollen from the pollen parent is placed on the pistil with a clean index finger. You can see the pollen attach to the pistil. A white plastic plant label is attached to the stem with plastic coated wire twist. The label is clearly marked with the name of the seed parent first, an x, and the name of the pollen parent. The bloom is "bagged." A brown lunch bag is placed over the flower and fastened to the stem with a clothes pin. My neighbors think I'm growing bags. I tell them I am the vendor for Bloomingdales "Brown Bags." I mark the bag with the first letter of the month and day of the month. For example, D 12 is December 12, which reminds me to remove the bag ten days later on December 22.

The flower needs to be left alone to drop off on its own. When a cross takes place, a seed pod will slowly develop. The beginning formation can be seen in a few weeks. The pod can be seen by spring. Some pods are very attractive as they change from green to bronze. The majority are shades of brown which is clearly adaptive as they blend into the shrubbery. When you spring prune, all controlled crosses are left alone. I generally remove all spent flowers and any unwanted seed pods in order to keep the shrub putting all its energy into growth.

Why is it that no seed pods develop? Some reasons include:

1. Damp or rainy weather at the time of hybridizing.
2. Damage to the pistil or ovary during emasculating the flower.
3. The bud selected is immature – a bud should be selected that will open in 2 to 3 days.
4. Low quality pollen.

Genetic incompatibility, e.g. inter species crosses are very difficult to make.

The seed parent is female sterile. Specifically rose form and formal doubles are female sterile. Peony forms have low female fertility. The pollen or male part of these blooms are normally fertile. However, single and semi double flowers are usually male and female fertile.

In order to hybridize, a few mature cultivars that set seed readily are required. Gene Phillips has listed cultivars in the *Camellia Journal* December 2003 – February 2004 issue. While my own experience is limited I have excellent seed production from 'Tama-no-ura' and 'Tama Peacock' with only fair results from 'Tama Americana' and 'Wildfire'. I am evaluating 'Red Devil', a cultivar similar to 'Red Hots'.

In *reticulatas* I am evaluating 'LASCA Beauty', 'Frank Houser' 'Ruta Hagman' and 'Valley Knudsen' based on reports of their viability as seed parents. As a *Camellia* flower show exhibitor that picks spent blooms and prunes annually, I may have seed setters that haven't been allowed to produce. I plan to experiment with selected cultivars to see if pods develop.

A review of the literature shows the following *reticulata* camellias as having been used for hybridizing with excellent results:

'Mouchang' Tom Nuccio told me that theirs has many seed pods. It is the seed parent of 'W.P. Guilly'

'Crimson Robe' (Dalaohong) it is the seed parent of 'Dr. Clifford Parks'.

'Buddha' is the seed parent for 'Frank Houser'.

'Cornelian' (Damano) it is the seed parent for 'Emma Gaeta'.

What to do with seeds?

Before leaving on vacation in July, I put old nylon stockings or onion bags around the seed pod. They are attached with plant ties. When the pod opens the seeds are collected in

the bag. In October if the pods are still on the shrub and look mature, I pick them and leave them in a dry warm location to open.

Optimally seeds should be planted as soon as possible after the pod opens. I enjoy making the rounds and checking for the open pods. Seeds may be stored in a cool dry location including a refrigerator for months. However, it's my practice to germinate seeds immediately in a clear plastic container with screw top. All of the same crosses are placed in the same container with their plant label. Peat moss is an excellent medium. It is fully saturated with water and handful by handful wrung out before being placed in the container. This leaves a moist not wet medium for germinating in the closed plastic container. There is no further evaporation.

The containers are placed outside in the shade in a protected exposure. Seeds germinate readily. When there is a tap root and stem with two or more leaves they are planted in a one gallon pot with the appropriate plant label. I pinch off the tip of the root, fully covering the root allowing the seed to sit on the surface of the growing medium.

The pot gets a handful of pine bark on the bottom to help with drainage. I use a commercial *Camellia* mix with added perlite, fir bark and some oak leaf mould. The only peat moss used is just what clings to the roots from the germinating container.

The one gallon pot is placed outside in a protected exposure. No hardening off is required as germinating and growth of seedlings is outside in the generally similar exposure. After a year, seedlings are 6 to 10 inches tall and are the same or larger size than cuttings made the same year.

Care of Seedlings

Generally the same practice one would use to grow container camellias is followed. Therefore this includes sun protection and moist not wet

growing condition. I have not fertilized first year seedlings. The second year seedlings are provided small amounts of liquid fertilizer. Currently I am using one drop of liquid Shultz 10-15-10 per gallon once a month during the growing season. This is one quarter of the recommended amount on the label. As seedlings mature additional fertilizing can be used, e.g. Miracid (Miraclegro for Azaleas and Camellias) at 1/4 to 1/2 the recommended amounts or cotton seed meal every 45 days during

the growing season.

In conclusion my adventure into hybridizing is only three years old—just a child. I am following the sage advice of Dr. Clifford Parks to make as many crosses of different types based on my objectives rather than large numbers of the same cross. Hybridizing and the care of seeds and seedlings are like the care of ones grandchildren. It is an activity to keep one involved, lively and young of heart before AARP tries to take over.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SOCIETY FAVORITES

Bradford King
February, 2005

The 2005 joint meeting of the Pacific Camellia Society and the Southern California Society was held at Descanso Gardens. The meeting featured Tom Nuccio who provided an interesting and informative talk about new camellias being grown at Nuccio's Nursery in Altadena, California. He showed examples of several new yellow hybrids as well as a number of fragrant camellias. He discussed the nursery's hybridizing program—which is seeking camellias with blue tones and others with hues of peach. Foliage camellias were also examined.

My personal favorite was *C. Assemlis* which has beautiful light bronze to maroon new leaves. I could see it as a great addition to my bonsai collection until Marilee Gray won it in the camellia raffle!

As part of the program the attendees voted for their favorite camellias from a pre-selected list.

The results of the voting are as follows:

Species:—'Shibori-Egao' and 'Yuletide' tied for first place. 'Egao' was next.

Small japonica—'Hishi Karito' and

'Red Hots' tied for first and 'Grace Albritton' came in third.

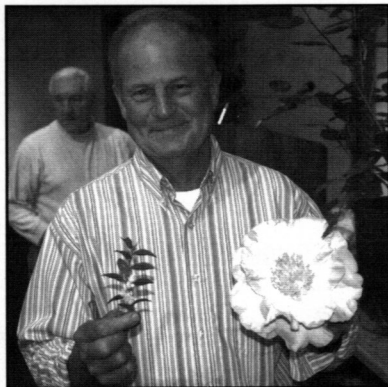
Medium: japonica—'Nuccio's Carousel' was the clear winner. 'Firedance Variegated' and 'Margaret Davis' tied for runner-up.

Large japonica—The winner was 'Elegans Champagne'. There was a tie for runner-up between 'Tomorrow Park Hill' and 'Royal Velvet'.

Non-Reticulata Hybrids—The lovely 'Nicky Crisp' won first place followed by 'Waltz Time Variegated' and third, 'Spring Daze'.

Reticulata Hybrids—'Frank Hauser' beat out 'Harold L. Paige' by one vote! 'Dr. Clifford Parks' came in third.

The camellia with the largest number of votes was 'Nuccio's Carousel'. 'Frank Hauser' took second and there was a third place tie between 'Elegans Champagne' and 'Harold L. Paige'. Every camellia on the ballot received at least one vote which proves that there is no universal favorite! However, the one thing that we all agree on is that the camellia IS the "Queen" of winter flowers.



.A big favorite of camellia hobbyists, is Tom Nuccio who always brings exciting information and plants to our meetings.

Tom reminded the group that camellias come in ALL sizes. Here he is showing the contrast in size between 'Queen Bee' and *C. transarisanensis*.

WHAT'S NEW IN CAMELLIAS?

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

What new varieties of camellias were introduced the last several years that you may want to add to your collection? Which newer varieties appeared at the shows this season? You need to know "What's New!"

What's cooking? CUPCAKE! This non-reticulata hybrid has many flowers and is a lovely coral pink that shades lighter toward the center of the bloom. Nuccio's Nursery introduced this Saluenensis hybrid in 2002-2003. It is a small single flower that blooms mid-to-late season. The bloom occasionally shows deep coral pink stripes or an unwanted plain pink flower.

I recently purchased a plant when looking for small blooms to make up a mixed tray of three (consisting of a large, a medium and a small bloom of any variety). 'Cupcake' matches color tones very nicely with medium blooms like 'Nuccio's Carousel' or 'Nuccio's Pearl', and large flowers such as "Tomorrow Park Hill" and "Tiffany".

This year I noticed that the non-reticulata hybrid show classes, especially trays of 3 and 5, had limited numbers of entries. 'Cupcake' is an excellent choice for trays as the blooms are like a row of cupcakes ready for "baking"—or, in our case, "traying" and "showing!" On the other hand as an entry as a single flower it may not rise to the head table.

Like many camellia hobbyists I am always on the lookout for blooms that show unique color tones. In this article I would like to point out some camellias that have unique shades of

coral or blue. First, the aforementioned 'Cupcake' is a coral pink saluenensis. Nuccio's has other new reticulata saluenensis hybrids that show coral colors. In 2003-2004 they introduced 'Coral Bouquet' which is worth looking into. I won my 'Coral Bouquet' at the Southern California Society plant raffles and have enjoyed this addition to my collection. The flower is a medium tubular deep pink coral. Other growers at our shows this season have showed it.

Another Nuccio 2003-2004 introduction is 'Hot Shot'. It is an unusual saluenensis hybrid with a bluish deep pink color. It has a medium semi-double flower that blooms mid-to-late season. This medium upright plant can make a showy garden specimen in a shaded garden location.

Nuccio's introduced another coral pink camellia in 2002-2003 called 'Jackpot'. It is a semi-double flat and rounded bloom. The flower is miniature-to- small in size. It is a profuse bloomer mid-to-late season. It too is a saluenensis hybrid. Another such hybrid that has recently become available is 'Island Sunset'. This has a semi-double medium flower from mid-to-late season. The blooms are a rich coral pink that is lighter in the center.

VARIATION OF OLDER VARIETALS

Many of us have enjoyed the early red blooms of 'San Dimas', 'Nuccio's' has produced a variegated form of this large brilliant red wavy semi-double.

It is an eye-catcher! A recent specimen at one of our shows was an excellent well-variegated entry. The variegation was widely distributed small white markings. The brilliant red with white markings gets my recommendation! On the other hand, I can't recommend 'Wildfire Variegated'. The ones I have seen had just enough white to ruin one of my favorite medium japonicas.

This year Nuccio's released their variegated 'Nuccio's Bella Rosa' and 'Frank Houser'. 'Bella Rosa' and its variegated form are excellent landscape plants, which are commercially available throughout the United States. Nuccio's has made an agreement with Monrovia Nursery to be the exclusive wholesaler of this plant. This is a boon for the camellia hobbyist throughout the country.

'Frank Houser' and 'Frank Houser

Variegated' are two of the best reticulatas available. The rose red blooms are very large, semi-double to loose peony with wavy 'rabbit ears'. It is a beauty! The plant has a great growth habit. According to the Nomenclature, 'Frank Houser' was first variegated in 1990.

Most Southern California camellia growers have variegated their own plants by grafting onto variegated understock. Therefore, the introduction by Nuccio's of a variegated 'Frank Houser' is an exciting development. 'Frank Houser' and its variegated form is one of my favorite reticulatas as it does well in the garden, in a home display and it wins at shows. What more can you ask of a beautiful camellia?

IT'S ALL IN A NAME

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

Have you ever wondered about Camellia names? How did 'Maroon and Gold' get its name? Why did the Nuccios call the large flowering bright red and white sasanqua 'Navajo'? What does 'Tama-no-ura' mean in Japanese? Or, what does 'Egao' translate to in English? My investigation into camellia names revealed some interesting as well as obvious information!

One observation you probably have made yourself is that a great number of camellias have been named after people. Some were named after famous people; some are named for the hybridizer and others commemorate family members or friends. One example of a camellia named for a famous person is 'General Dwight Eisenhower'. A 1947 red peony-form bloom was christened 'General Dwight Eisenhower' to honor the World War II General who headed up the Allied invasion of Normandy. The 60th anniversary of the ending of World War II is August 2004, which is why I selected this particular camellia to illustrate famous names. It is interesting to note that in 1947 Dwight Eisenhower was a General and not yet President of the United States.

The use of titles is a common one. There are 19 japonica camellias that use the title of 'General.' Female titles are equally represented with 'Queen' used 18 times and 'Princess' 17 times. The male counterparts are used less—'King' a mere 7 times and 'Prince' only 11. However, the use of 'Pope' and 'President' were used only twice each. Thus, the only two United States Presidents who have a camellia named after them are Franklin D. Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln. Both are listed in the Camellia Nomenclature Supplement. At least all is equal in that one is a Democrat

and the other a Republican! There was, however, a camellia japonica named for Richard Nixon back in 1956 but well before he ran for President.

A large number of camellias are named after their hybridizers. In the reticulatas we have cultivars called 'Howard Asper', 'Jack Mandarich', 'John Hunt' and 'Dr. Clifford Parks'. 'Carter's Sunburst' is a japonica seedling developed by Carter in 1958. It is a pale pink striped with deeper pink. It is a large to very large semi-double or peony-form, which connotes a sunburst.

The non-reticulata hybridizers have also used their own names. For example, Professor E.G. Waterhouse from Australia bred 'E.G. Waterhouse'.

In 1954 he developed the lovely pink formal-double saluenensis that bears his name. Hybridizers have frequently commemorated family members by naming camellias after them. A few of the more famous ones are 'Gulio Nuccio', 'Katherine Nuccio', 'Joe Nuccio', 'Margaret Davis' and 'Margarite Hertrick'.

I particularly appreciate when a nursery uses their name for cultivars they have developed. Bob Cherry from Australia calls his company Paradise Nurseries. He is credited with introducing over 20 new camellias, the majority of which are sasanquas and hybrids. Thus, he most often begins the name with 'Paradise' thereby identifying and commemorating his cultivars. One of his favorites is 'Paradise Audrey'. This lovely small pink flower with touches of peach is named after his mother. In 1997 he named a C. sasanqua after his first-born daughter, 'Paradise Jennifer'.

In Southern California we have the world-known Nuccio's Nursery.

In 1935 Julius Nuccio founded his nursery in Alhambra, California. It was moved in 1947 to the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains to Altadena, California. The Nuccio family continues to develop new cultivars each year. While they have introduced more than 200 cultivars, only eight japonicas and one reticulata have the first name of Nuccio. The japonicas are 'Nuccio's Cameo', 'Nuccio's Carousel', 'Nuccio's Gem', 'Nuccio's Jewel', 'Nuccio's Pearl', 'Nuccio's Pink Lace' and 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa'. 'Nuccio's Ruby' is the lone reticulata. I own all of these lovely cultivars and, while I enjoy all of them, my favorite is 'Nuccio's Carousel'. Many people would anoint 'Nuccio's Gem' as Nuccio's Nurseries best introduction. In fact, Paul Jones the noted camellia painter said in 1996, 'Having examined countless camellias at their best, I feel well qualified to nominate the perfect bloom and in my opinion perfection is exemplified by 'Nuccio's Gem'.' (Macoboy's Encyclopedia of Camellias, 1997). That same reference reported that Julius Nuccio's favorite introduction is 'Nuccio's Gem'.

How did 'Maroon and Gold' get its name? This small loose peony-form maroon flower with gold stamens was named by Jude Nuccio. That is, at least, what he told me. He loves the University of Southern California (USC) football program (as do I!). And, therefore, when this 1961 introduced bloom showed the same colors as USC—maroon and gold—he felt the name was appropriate.

Why did Reg Ragland name his 1958 introduction of a deep coral-rose medium tulip-shape semi-double japonica 'Francis Butler'? Recently I had the good fortune to ask Francis Butler this very question at a Southern California Camellia meeting. She told me that she had been visiting the Ragland's home at a time when he was evaluating seedling flowers. Reg was about to cut off the lovely coral rose flower to use

the plant for grafting purposes. Francis spoke up about the beautiful bloom and he said, 'It's yours.' And thus it was named as a commemoration of their friendship.

There are a few well-known camellias that are named for the area where they were discovered. Two such sports are of special interest in Southern California. 'Mrs. D.W. Davis Descanso' is a sport of 'Mrs. D.W. Davis' and was first seen at Descanso Gardens, La Canada, California. It is a large white full-peony bloom. In Hollywood, California, at the Peer Estate 'Park Hill,' a second-generation sport of 'Tomorrow' was discovered. This very large informal double with its pink shading to light pink in the center was named 'Tomorrow Park Hill'. As reported by Jim McQuiston in the last issue of *The Review*, the Peer estate was sold. It is everyone's sincere hope that its new owner will maintain the beautiful camellia gardens, especially the original reticulatas that he brought to the U.S. from Yunnan, China.

Why did Nuccios name the large flowering sasanqua with bright red and clear white 'Navajo'? This sasanqua was shipped to Star Nurseries in Sierra Madre, California from Japan in the 1930's. The original name was lost. Nuccio's Nursery propagated it in the 1940's and chose the name 'Navajo' after the Native American tribe who once lived in the Altadena area where the Nuccio Nursery is located. The flower is a striking large semi-double white with an intense red border. It is sun tolerant like most sasanquas and is a vigorous plant.

Some names are quite easy to discover. For example, Clark Thomas of San Dimas introduced the cultivar 'San Dimas' in 1972. It is an early bloomer that is a large red displaying wavy petals and yellow stamens. Another example is when in 1980, hybridizer Meyer Piet of Arcadia, chose to name his very large salmon pink reticulata 'Mauchand' x

sasanqua 'Bonanza' after his home town. Nearby in Arcadia is the Los Angeles Botanical Garden and Arboretum. In 1974 Dr. Clifford Parks introduced the lovely soft pink reticulata 'LASCA Beauty' and named it for the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum (hence, LASCA). One wonders whether future generations will be able to identify the anacronym now that the Arboretum has recently changed its name!

While I speak no Japanese, I have been very impressed with the melody and descriptiveness of this language in its use of camellia names. What does 'Tama-no-ura' actually mean? Well, in 1974 'Tama-no-ura' was found near Nagasaki, Japan. It was introduced into the USA in 1975 by Nuccio's Nursery. The Nuccio family has used it to hybridize nine lovely white-bordered japonicas. In Japanese 'Tama-no-ura' means to "decorate with jewels" which aptly describes this flower. The Japanese cultivar 'Okino-Nami' means "gathering storm" which we recognize in the severe weather storms in the ocean as a Tsunami. The cultivar 'KuroTsubaki' is a very dark red and been called 'Old Port', 'Black Prince' and even 'The Black Camellia'. It is traced back to 1896 and is the parent of a number of hybrids such as 'Night Rider' and 'Black Opal'. 'Kuro' means "black" and 'Tsubaki' is Japanese for "camellia."

The popular medium japonica that Americans call 'Magnoliaeflora' is aptly named as it looks like a magnolia flower and is a profuse bloomer. The Japanese call it 'Hagorome' and date it back to 1695. "Hagoroma" means "feathered robe" which in Japanese folklore is the traditional clothing of an angel. The plant was imported to Italy in 1886 from Japan. Another popular and long known japonica in America is called 'Herme'. In Greek mythology Herme was the messenger God which is the probable origin of the name. In

Japan where this cultivar originated back in 1859, it is called 'Hikarugenji' which means "brilliant genji." It was named after the romantic hero of a Japanese book Tale of Genji. A third popular Japanese cultivar 'Hishi-Karaito' has kept this name in America. This small pink bloom has a center of white petaloids that tend to cover the yellow stamens. In Japanese it translates to "threadlike stamens." What does "Egao" translate to in English? It means, "smiling face." an apt description of this species vernalis of its medium pink bloom and column of yellow stamens.

While very few japonicas' can be traced to China, reticulatas have their origin in China, especially from the Yunnan Province where they have been cultivated for centuries. Captain Rawes introduced them to England in 1820 but it was not until 1948 that Dr. Walter Lammerts and Ralph Peer were able to import 20 cultivars to the U.S. Fourteen of them survived at what is now Descanso Gardens. Several of these cultivars are still growing in Southern California and can be purchased at Nuccio's Nursery.

'Pagoda' is a large deep scarlet formal to rose-form double. The Chinese name is 'Songzilin' which means "pine cone." It is also known as 'Robert Fortune', the man responsible for importing it to England in 1847.

The Chinese name for 'Shot Silk' is 'Dayinhong' which is translated "great spinel pink." It is easy to see why English-speaking camellia growers preferred 'Shot Silk' as its Chinese name is difficult to pronounce. Further, it is unclear, at least to me, what "great spinel pink" actually means. The noun 'spinel' is defined as "a mineral, consisting chiefly of oxides of magnesium and aluminum and occurring in various colors". Webster's New World Dictionary adds that while found in various colors there is a red variety used as a gem and it is called "spinel

ruby." In a third reference checked for a definition, spinel was discovered as an ornamental stone used in jewelry usually colored a vivid bluish-pink. No wonder we stick with calling it 'Shot Silk'!

'Houye Diechi' translates to "thick leaf butterfly wings" which has been shortened to 'Butterfly Wings' and aptly describes this rose pink, very large semi-double flower with its irregular border and wavy petals.

Now with some knowledge of the background of names given to camellias, it's your turn to attempt to figure out from the camellia name something key to the following cultivators in the "Camellia Name Quiz."

1. What form is 'Black Tie'?
2. What color is 'Wildfire'?
3. What shape is 'Fircone'?
4. What is characteristic about 'High Fragrance'?
5. What color is 'Alba Plena'?
6. What shape is 'Cardinal's Cap'?
7. What size is 'Tinsie'?
8. What color is 'Rudolph'?
9. What size is 'Tama Bambino'?
10. When does 'Yuletide' bloom?
11. Describe the form of 'Star Above Star'.
12. What colors does 'Pink Frost' exhibit?

Look for the answers on page 27.

At the heart of gardening
there is a belief in the miraculous.
—Mirabel Osler

A CAMELLIA VIRUS UPDATE

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

OVERVIEW

The camellia virus(es) that produces yellow leaf markings and white blotches on blooms are the topic of this article. A model cultivar for this discussion is 'Adolphe Audusson'. The bloom is a large dark red semi-double form. According to the *Camellia Nomenclature*, it was developed in France in 1877. Its variegated form has been around for a long time. When it is predominately white, it is called 'Adolphe Audusson Special'. This is attributed to Jenkins from the United States back in 1942.

Now things begin to get interesting!

It is common to find 'Adolphe Audusson' variegated as blotches, water markings, moires, combinations or as a "special" on the same plant. This raises the interesting and controversial question: Is this one basic virus manifesting itself in different symptoms? Or, is it several different strains?

One conclusion is clear. The term "special" is used to differentiate a variegated flower that is predominately white. This is done, for example, to judge 'Adolphe Audusson Variegated' (less than 50% white) and 'Adolphe Audusson Special' (more than 50% white) separately. However, this begs the question about the number of camellia viruses.

Nuccio's Nursery growers, Tom and Jude Nuccio, believe that there are several different viruses or 3 to 5 strains that can produce the different patterns of white on this flower. The most reliable observation of various viruses is found by examining the leaves. Tim Thibault, former camellia curator at Descanso Gardens and currently at Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Gardens, believes there are 4 or 5 different camellia viruses. He reports observation of three viral patterns on camellia foliage—those being yellow, ring spots or mottled.

These forms seem to be highly reliable. Specifically, the Nuccios also confirm observing these three patterns. However, no clear pattern has been reported linking the leaf forms with the type of white markings. Tim Thibault is of the opinion that the moired white pattern is one of the camellia viruses that holds its color forms fairly well.

One major problem noted by the Nuccios, Tim Thibault, Gene Phillips and Clifford Parks is that virus plants are weaker than non-virus plants. Tim Thibault estimates as much as 50% less robust. The good news according to our experts is that much of this can be modified by good culture.

How is the camellia virus transferred? What are the mechanisms of the transfer process? It is possible the virus strains may have different modes of transferring themselves. Tim reports that "the yellow leaf pattern is harder to transfer and would most likely require intentional grafting." He also says that tools, insects—especially aphids—have been identified as transfer agents of viruses in other plants. This is important for the hobbyist to know to control ants on camellias as they herd aphids and thereby increase the chance of unwanted viral contact. In addition, the aphids may weaken plants, especially a factor on a virused camellia due to its weakened condition. In other words, good culture includes control of ants and aphids for the best growth and reduction of chance viral infection.

Tim indicates there may be underground transfer mechanisms as well. This might be spontaneous root grafting between plants growing in the same bed.

HOW IS THE VIRUS INTENTIONALLY INTRODUCED IN CAMELLIAS?

There are three major methods to intentionally variegated a camellia. The

most common is to graft a non-virus scion onto variegated rootstock; e.g. 'Adolphe Audusson Variegated', 'Shibori Egao', etc.

A second method is to graft a non-virus scion and a virus scion onto the same understock. The third method is variously called "approach" grafting, "fail safe" grafting or "whip" grafting. Briefly stated, this is when a branch of a virus plant is attached to a branch or trunk of the camellia to be infected. The bark is taken off exposing the cambrium layer of both. The two branches are fitted together (cambrium layer to cambrium layer). Once firmly fitted into place they are secured with electrical tape or something similar. This method can be used to intentionally introduce more viruses or a new virus form into an already variegated camellia.

The virus moves through the cambrium layer and over time it spreads, infecting flowers and leaves throughout the cultivar. You can observe this process in your garden. For example, I observed the leaves of a 'Royal Velvet' become yellow streaked after I attached it to a virused 'Debutante'.

This occurred after the 'Debutante' broke dormancy in the spring. The blooms the following January and February showed white blotches indicating viral transfer. The 'Royal Velvet' below the graft point showed no viral symptoms. We can infer that virus moved in the "sap" through the cambrium layer going up in the spring and down in the fall. The non-virused lower portion of 'Royal Velvet' became infected after the "sap" flowed down in the fall.

It is frustrating when a variegated flower has only a few white marks as it essentially ruins the beauty. The virus needs to produce a wide and even distribution of white throughout the bloom. There are two basic strategies available. First, is to be patient and hopeful that the virus will spread on its own. The second is to add virus as discussed earlier in

"approach grafting."

Many of us are looking for the just the "right" variegation. At this time we have no reliable method of producing a specific white marking on a bloom, as we have few clues to the different strains of virus and what each can produce. Therefore, we can use a trial and error method. In order to improve our odds it makes sense to use viral understock when available that has produced flowers with the desired white marking. Another way would be use of a scion from a cultivar whose bloom has shown the wanted white color forms.

One of the most desired variegations is the "moiré" white pattern. As noted earlier, Tim Thibault has observed this as more reliable than other variegation patterns. Therefore, using a scion from a cultivar that produces moire flowers has a better chance of producing similar markings.

CAN THE CAMELLIA VIRUS BE INHERITED THROUGH SEEDS?

Tom Nuccio clearly stated "no" when I posed this question to him recently.

Likewise, when I asked Gene Phillips, author of "Hybridizers Corner" in the *American Camellia Journal*, he said, "I have never seen a seedling that had a virus . . . I have seen seedlings with genetic variegation . . ."

GENETIC WHITE

The model blooms for genetic white markings are 'Aspasia' and 'Tama-No-Ura'. The former represents "sporting" and the latter, "hybridizing."

The Australian Japonica camellia 'Aspasia' has at least 9 sports. The most popular are 'Margaret Davis', a white to cream bloom with a rose-red edged vermilion border, and 'Jean Clere', a bright rose-red with a white band around the petal edges.

This model illustrates that the white markings and border are mutations produced by the

underlying genetic make-up in the cultivar.

'Tama-No-Ura' has a single small red flower with a white border. It has been used as the seed parent to hybridizing 9 white picotied-bordered cultivars by Nuccio's Nursery. This model illustrates the intentional use of a cultivar as a seed parent to produce the highly valued white border.

CONCLUSION

There is little specific research on camellia viruses but as camellia growers we are fascinated with blooms that show the characteristic white variegation.

We are also interested in new hybridized blooms that show the distinctive white border.

I began this article with skepticism about the presence of multiple camellia viruses and I end it by concluding with the experts that there are from three to five different camellia viruses. While we still have much to learn about these viruses, we can continue our fascination with developing the characteristics that produce quality white variegated blooms on our show flowers.

WHEN CAMELLIAS AREN'T "IN SEASON"

Bradford King, Arcadia, California

There are numerous annuals and sun-loving perennials like roses and daylilies that are excellent spring and summer flowers that gardeners can enjoy when our favorite camellias have long finished blooming. This article will discuss three perennial plants that can complement your camellia collection by providing colorful blooms in spring and summer as well as taking advantage of the shade provided by your camellia plants.

EPIPHYLLUM

Epiphyllums are true shade-loving cacti that require abundant moisture. In nature, "epips" are epiphytes found in the rain and cloud forests of Central and South America. The original species were all night blooming. The hybrids available today bloom during the day. The blossoms last 2-4 days, but they come in a wide range of beautiful flowers from yellow to orange to red. They can be spectacular with their blended color tones or vibrant bi-color combinations.

Generally "epips" are grown as terrestrial plants in containers. The roots sit directly in a thick, moist mix of five parts potting soil and one part orchid bark or sponge rock. Most of us prefer using plastic pots. I generally grow these plants in hanging pots among my camellia collection. They can be hung from the trees that provide shade for your camellias or hung on hooks from posts that support shade cloth or from the lath house. Since they are in pots, they can be moved easily if they interfere with your camellia collection. Most of the year "epips" are fed with a balanced 10-10-10 fertilizer; however, beginning in January, 2-10-10 fertilizer is used to boost blooms. This is exactly what we do to produce show quality camellias. Therefore, as I feed the camellias, I sprinkle a small handful on the epiphyllums.

While the plants are relatively unattractive and grow every-which-way,

the blooms they produce are spectacular. In this way they are like the camellia 'Emma Gaeta Variegated'. Since the flowering season for "epips" is May and June in Southern California, we are rewarded by their colorful blooms just when most camellias have bloomed out. I pick their flowers in the early morning just as I do camellias. I display them in the same cups, bowls or vases that I use to display my camellia blossoms.

My current favorite is 'Beyond Perfection', an extra large deep red edged with fuchsia and a purple throat. George French hybridized this variety. In June 1997 I paid \$5.00 each for 3 cuttings bought from Rainbow Gardens.

While large yellow camellias aren't available, you can get great yellow epiphyllums. I grow two varieties. 'Vista Sun' is a large yellow with a white center. It is a vigorous grower with profuse blooms. I also grow 'Sonoma Sunshine' which is a wide-open large butter yellow with darker yellow sepals that are pointed and recurved.

If you miss fragrance when growing camellias, you can remedy that with numerous "epip"s that will satisfy the need for aroma. 'Fragrant Cloud' is just one possibility. It is a medium orange-red with a sweet perfume.

I purchased my collection of nine varieties as cuttings from Rainbow Garden's catalogue and received the shipment by mail. Unfortunately this nursery located in Vista, California is now out of business except for the bookstore. Cuttings can still be found through local Epiphyllum Societies or the Cactus/ Succulent Shows." Epips" are very easy to propagate from cuttings. A six-inch piece should be allowed to callus. Then sprinkle rooting compound on the cut end and put into potting mix. Do not water for a week. This method works successfully almost every time! I have more than tripled my collection using this method and could add even more except for the space limitations!

CLIVIA (Kaffir Lily)

This evergreen perennial is a striking member of the amaryllis family. The original lily has clusters of brilliant orange tubular shaped flowers. The plant is a dense clump of dark green flat strap-shaped leaves about 18" long. While it is listed as blooming from December through April, most plants bloom in the spring months of March and April.

I first saw this plant in New England as a houseplant at my grandparents' farmhouse. In frost-free areas like Southern California, clivia are grown outside with azaleas and camellias. It makes a handsome border for a camellia garden.

The plant needs light but not direct sun. Clumps left undisturbed will last for years yet they will expand and are easy to dig up and divide. I have two brick planters flanking the garage in which I have been unsuccessful growing azaleas or camellias. However, the clivia plants, a Tom Nuccio suggestion, have bloomed reliably for the past few years. In fact, clivia bloom best when the roots are crowded. Fertilize clivia with cottonseed meal or the balanced fertilizer used on the Epiphyllums. Clivia are very forgiving and dependable plants even when neglected for years.

I have just grown the traditional orange clivia, but hybridizers are developing new colors. 'Flame' is an outstanding hot orange red and the 'Solomone' hybrids have yellow flowers. This year at a camellia show a visitor told me that he is hybridizing clivia at home in his garage to develop new colors. We have much to look forward to from this old and reliable shade plant. I think it is great used as a container planting, even better used as a border plant and outstanding when grown in clumps under the shade of trees. (See Descanso Gardens Camellia Forest on the way to the Boddy House.) In addition, it is truly a low maintenance plant well worth the initial investment that will provide

years of enjoyment.

FUCHSIA

Hybrid fuchsia bloom from early summer to first frost. In Southern California the season is much longer. My specimen plant 'Firecracker' blooms 12 months of the year. I only prune it lightly. There are over 500 varieties of fuchsias grown in the western region of the United States. There is a wide array of color combinations as well. While fuchsias are like camellias in that they have no fragrance, hummingbirds visit both plants. This is one of the many reasons to have camellias and fuchsias in your landscape. The most common year-round hummingbird is the Anna's. However, the last several years I have also hosted the Black-chinned and Allen's' hummingbirds. The Huntington Botanical Gardens and Descanso Gardens, two local and internationally-recognized camellia gardens, also host these species of hummingbirds.

Fuchsias range in size from fingernail-sized blooms to blooms as large as a child's hand. There are single and double blossom varieties that can be grown as shrubs from 3' to 12' tall. Trailing varieties are best suited for hanging containers. Fuchsias can be trained as basket plants or espaliered. Fuchsias grow best in low light and cool summers.

As a native New Englander, I was awe-struck when I first visited Southern California and saw these plants grown as shrubs for year-round bloom. Roger's Gardens in Corona del Mar has a very wide range of outstanding hanging fuchsia's for sale. Fuchsias can be grown as companion shrubs to camellias or in hanging baskets from your lath house or from nearby trees. I have used them as such for a number of years in the area near my camellias. Care is needed when fertilizing them under such condition; however, I found that liquid fertilizer used on the fuchsias flowed onto the camellias below and caused fertilizer

burn on the leaves. In this event, fertilizing should be done away from the camellias or a dry fertilizer such as Osemcote can be used.

When camellias are no longer in bloom, colorful flowers abound even in the shaded parts of my garden. I know I am not alone in enjoying color in the landscape after the camellias are past blooming. Marilee Gray grows and raises clematis, one of my favorite evergreen vines. Presently I have seven varieties which bloom along a decorative fence in an area that is exclusively daylilies. Clematis roots are provided shade by the daylilies yet

they share equally the full-sun location. Another gardener, Sergio Bracci is intrigued with plants of yet another shape and form. He grows cycads, evergreen plants with firm, large palm or fern-like leaves. His extensive collection includes some rare cycads that he grows under shade cloth.

We all are passionate about our individual collections of camellias but as true gardeners we also enjoy and treasure other examples of blooming plants in our landscape that provide pleasure throughout the gardening year.

A CAMELLIA LOVER'S CALENDAR

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

Camellias are native to Asia and have been cultivated for thousand of years. Currently they are grown in over a hundred countries around the world. This article focuses on landscaping and the growing of show quality flowers. In the following article, the reader will be provided with an overview of camellia culture for the months of September through December.

SEPTEMBER

This is the month for camellia species—*Sasanqua* and *Hiemalis*. These sun-loving camellias begin to bloom starting in September. Typically they produce a profusion of single flowers. The small green leaves make for excellent landscape plants in sun or partial sun. Some examples of lovely early blooming *Sasanquas* are 'Bonanza', 'Dazzler', 'Hugh Evans' and 'Showa-no-Sake'.

SEPTEMBER-TO-DO LIST

Proper watering continues to be very important. While there are no direct rules provided as to frequency of watering due to various weather conditions, plant location or types of soil, the general principle is never to allow a camellia to completely dry out. As it "never rains" in Southern California foliage spraying late in the afternoon is greatly appreciated by camellias especially when temperatures go above 85 degrees fahrenheit. This added water increases moisture and helps clean foliage of dirt and smog films that can build up on the leaves. Water when sprayed also knocks off white flies, aphids, and spider mites that are frequent hot weather pests.

While insects do not generally bother camellias, a noticeable exception is spider mites. If a well-watered camellia has had a good foliage spray but continues to have dusky brown color on the underside

of the leaves, spider mites are probably the cause.

A light summer oil spray should be applied this month on camellias not in bloom. The oil will spoil any open flowers beauty. There are a number of products available which when applied, as the manufacturer recommends will smother larva and eggs. A second, and even a possible third application, applied every 10 days are needed to control spider mites.

OCTOBER

Some of the loveliest *Sasanquas* are lightening up the landscape with their profusion of blooms this month! 'Apple Blossom', 'Double Rainbow' and 'Dwarf Shishi' to name a few, are examples that come to mind. Many of the camellia fanciers follow our Asian brethren by leaving the petals where they fall on the ground. This makes for a lovely carpet of kaleidoscopic-colored petals surrounding the plant. This practice for this specie provides no danger that petals will develop Sclerotium to cause petal blight later in the season.

OCTOBER-TO-DO LIST

The need to water camellias as required by your local weather conditions continues. Remember the mantra "moist not wet" for optional culture

I begin the dormant season fertilization this month after the heat of August and September has passed. Other growers will begin late August or September. The key is the weather—if hot (over 85°) especially with camellias planted less than 15 years old grave problems can develop. A low nitrogen product such as Grow Power (2-10-10) is recommended. There are other good products that are 0-10-10 or 3-10-10. The first number represents the Nitrogen content, which needs to be less than 3%.

Nitrogen is used for synthesis of protein compounds and promotes leaf and stem development. The second number stands for Phosphorus. Phosphorus promotes the development of roots, flowers and seeds and 10% is optimal. Potassium is the third number and is also used at 10%. It helps to increase the water content of cells, thereby enhancing resistance to drought and some plant diseases.

In summary, a 2-10-10 (N-P-K) formulas are good dormant fertilizers as they promote flowering and don't stimulate leaf and shoot development while the camellia plant is in it's dormant phase. The convention wisdom is that some 1, 2 or 3% Nitrogen is preferable to no Nitrogen content.

NOVEMBER

Hiemales and Sasanqua camellias are reaching peak bloom this month in Southern California. They are outstanding landscape plants that enjoy more sun than Japonicas. Some of the favorites are 'Jean May', 'Kanjiro', 'Rainbow' and 'Shishi-Gashira'.

NOVEMBER-TO-DO LIST

Regular deep watering that provides a moist but not wet soil continues to be needed when little or no rain is expected.

Camellias are slow-growing hardy shrubs—small trees that are acid loving plants. Therefore, the dormant season fertilization program discussed for October continues this month at intervals of 45 days. While a 2-10-10 fertilizer is recommended, if you have a product you like that has a nitrogen level over 3a, you should reduce the amount of fertilizer applied to the plant. For example, for a 6-10-10 mixture reduce by half to its equivalent 3-5-5. Three additional recommendations are also in order. First, never fertilize a dry plant. Second, use less (one-half) the recommended amount on

Nonreticulata hybrids. Finally, remember that less is better than to over-fertilize.

Fall pruning can be done during this month. The Camellia Review editor Mel Belcher is a strong advocate for fall pruning! Pruning either in fall or spring will help improve blooms and enhances a healthy, well-groomed plant in the landscape. Prune out all dead wood and weak growth. Low growing branches can be removed. All branches that cross inside the plant need to be removed to allow light and air to pass throughout the plant. Always make a clean, smooth cut back toward a healthy growth bud. New growth can be directed by choosing the bud growth pointing in the desired direction, which normally is away from the trunk. Never leave crushed leaves or damaged stems or bark. If need be, recut to get a smooth undamaged outcome.

Special consideration is needed in pruning members of the Elegans family. It is recommended to leave the main stem (trunk) of any Elegans until the plant has reached its desired height, otherwise growth is exclusively lateral. In other words, Elegans does not grow vertically very easily once it has been topped.

In addition, special care in pruning Reticulatas is desirable. It is best to cut back to a well-developed growth bud especially in young plants. Reticulatas are less forgiving than Japonicas.

In Southern California high winds can be expected in the fall especially during the winter months. These winds can do considerable damage to both large and small trees. Periodic pruning of large landscape trees is necessary. If your camellias are growing under larger trees then even more care is required. I have several fast growing trees of the Ficus family that shade my camellia garden which require annual pruning. I have found November an ideal month for this project as it is after the heat of summer and the major growth season. After

pruning, the camellias get more light and sunshine as the fall days get shorter which helps bud set and flower development. This time is prior to the traditional windstorms and better for your budget with the upcoming holiday expenses!

DECEMBER

The very best species, *Vernalis*, now begin blooming this month. They are wonderful landscape plants and frequent show winners in the "species" class. The local favorites year in and year out are 'Egao', 'Shibari-Egao', 'Grady's Egao' and 'Star Above Star'. They are all deemed medium or large flowers of great beauty. In addition, the late blooming *Sasanquas* 'Bert Jones' and 'Yuletide' are peaking during this month. While most camellias lack fragrance some of the *Sasanquas* are very fragrant, i.e. 'Bert Jones'. Finally, we must not overlook the early blooming *Japonicas* as they make their appearance this season. Who has not noticed 'Debutante', 'San Dimas' and 'Moonlight Bay' at this time of the year? I always have 'Wildfire' and 'Tama-No-Ura' in full bloom this month. It gives me great delight even though there may be few to present at the upcoming shows that begin in January.

DECEMBER-TO-DO LIST

Regular deep watering continues to be of the utmost importance to keep buds and flowers at their very best. You may recall that flowers are 90% water and buds are the first part of a camellia to dry up when watering is inadequate. December is not generally considered to be part of the rainy season in Southern California.

The use of low nitrogen (2-10-10) fertilizer every 45 days continues to be applied for growers looking to produce flower show winners. When rain is predicted it is a great opportunity to get outside ahead of a storm to spread fertilizer on plants and let Mother Nature water it in.

Disbudding begins this month in order to obtain better and larger flowers. Leaf buds are not touched and can be easily distinguished in most varieties of camellias from the flower buds. The terminal buds are thinned to one. The one bud left is selected so that it is not crowded or will get misshapen by adjoining leaves. If possible, plan to leave the bud so that the bloom will face downwards so that water will drain off and not damage the flower. Buds along the stem may all be removed, or as I prefer, spaced 4" or 5" apart. This helps produce show quality flowers and still will leave many blooms to enjoy. Disbudding continues as needed into next year as some plants develop more buds. Further, I can never get buds off all at one time on a good-sized plant. Generally it is not the practice to disbud *Sasanquas* or other so-called "species". It is more common practice to disbud only *Japonicas*, *Reticulatas* and *Non-reticulata* hybrids to increase high quality blooms. If your purpose in owning these plants is primarily for their landscaping value then disbudding is not necessary.

Gibbing is generally done at this time to produce flowers for the shows that are scheduled anywhere in the next 30 to 90 days. If you want flowers for Christmas then gibbing must begin in November.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is gibbing? It is the practice of applying gibberellic acid, a natural occurring plant hormone. Why do people gib? It increases size of blooms and produces earlier blooms! At times it may even enhance color and change flower shape. How is gibbing done? The negative bud next to the flower bud to be gibbed is pinched off leaving a small cup. A drop of gibberellic acid is placed into the cup created or on the wound if a cup was not formed by the result. An eyedropper or similar utensil works well in placing the solution into the formed cup. Where

can you get gibberlic acid? Contact the American Camellia Society, 100 Massee Lane, Fort Valley, GA. 31030 to purchase.

How do you get a liquid solution from 1 gram of powdered gibberlic acid? Mix it with 2 ounces of distilled water and add a few drops of clear ammonia to get it into a solution.

How many buds can be gibbed? Leave at least 80% of the buds untreated per plant. I prefer to do a few on a plant each week for three to five weeks duration to spread out the production of early blooms. The goal is to get a show quality bloom for each show scheduled during the next two months, but mainly to have them peak for the early shows in January. Most Japonicas, Reticulatas and Non-Reticulate hybrids respond favorable to gibbing. A few favorite Japonicas that gibbing really improves are 'Royal Velvet', 'Herme', 'Magnoliaeflora', 'Grand Prix', 'Clark Hubbs', 'Maroon

and Gold' and members of the Elegans family. Exhibitors have special incentive to gib Reticulatas as they tend to bloom late in the season. Consequently, to show Reticulatas in the January shows they will need to be gibbed. Gibbing works great on 'Harold L. Paige', 'Dr. Clifford Parks', 'Linda Carrol', 'LASCA Beauty'. 'W.P. Gilley' and 'Larry Piet' just to name a few.

CONCLUSION

The life cycle of the camellia has been outlined over a twelve-month period to give the novice as well as the more advanced camellia grower an overview of camellia culture. It provides a timetable for what to do to the plants and when that should be done. But, why go to all this effort to make camellias produce such beautiful blossoms? In the words of my young grandchildren — "It's the funnest thing" to do!"

Return to TOC

A CALENDAR FOR CAMELLIA LOVERS

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

Camellia lovers and Southern California gardeners tend to their plants twelve months of the year. This article will discuss key issues and what to do each month.

JANUARY

The first month of the year is the beginning of the major blooming season for camellia Japonicas. Each day we are treated to surprises as new blooms open up! Most of these are the early Japonicas or late blooming species. Sasanquas such as 'Yuletide' or Vernalis such as 'Egao' or 'Star Above Star' are examples of late blooming species. 'Debutante', 'Wildfire' and 'Tama-no-ura' are typical early Japonicas.

JANUARY TO DO LIST

During this month camellias may be fertilized with a low nitrogen produce such as Grow Power (2-10-10) or 0-10-10 or 3-10-10 to produce show quality blooms. The key is the first number—nitrogen. It must be no greater than 3 or new growth may occur.

Warm weather and larger amounts of nitrogen may force the plant out of dormancy. When camellias are in bloom they are dormant, just the opposite of many other plants.

Adequate water is needed this

month. You may need to do supplementary watering if rain is light. Since the Camellia flower is about 90% water, a deficient supply causes blooms and buds to dry out, fall off or be undersized. The key to watering camellias is to keep the soil moist at all times but not wet and soggy. Warm and dry winds especially will dry out pots. It is important to check your plants regularly and water as needed in your area.

°Pick blooms to enjoy in your home. Camellia flowers look lovely floating in a bowl or favorite vase. I use some short circular candlestick holders I won at camellia shows for bloom holders.

Hybridizing or grafting may begin this month for the experienced gardener. It takes about seven years from seed to produce a flowering plant. The ACS Camellia Yearbook is an excellent resource. Participate in one of the many camellia shows in Southern California. Show your flowers as a novice, intermediate or regular society member. It is free! It is fun! The shows are also the best place to see the widest range of camellia flowers to help you learn more about camellia varieties. Make a list of what you want to grow. Take your list to Nuccio's Nursery AND don't forget your checkbook.

FEBRUARY

Japonica and reticulatas are in full bloom this month. Generally, these would be the midseason varieties. A key issue this month is the local weather. Rain is welcomed in Southern California and is essential for healthy plants and blooms. On the other hand, heavy rain may damage blooms. Heavy rain is out of our control but, if you disbud and leave buds which hang down, there is less rain damage to the flower than if the bloom faces up. This time of year the high winds called the "Santa Anas" in California are frequently a problem. There is nothing to do during a windstorm to protect your plants but, when you are landscaping, consider making your plantings where there are wind breaks such as large trees, fences and buildings. If you do have large trees on your property, they need to be pruned to let the air circulate.

FEBRUARY TO DO LIST

Supplement rain with additional water depending on your local condition. The key is MOIST, NOT WET.

Enjoy your blooms by picking them for your home or show the flowers in one of the weekly scheduled camellia shows.

Hybridizing continues this month for those interested in this part of the hobby. Grafting begins this month in Southern California when it is dry. This is an excellent method to propagate. One option is to use older varieties to graft on. Scions from new and better show camellias are readily available from Society members.

Spent blooms need to be picked up and disposed of in order to control petal blight. Petal blight causes brown spots on flowers and can be controlled by removing spent blooms from the ground.

MARCH

Late blooming japonicas and reticulatas continue to flower in March. As the weather becomes

warmer, most camellias in Southern California will finish blooming this month,

MARCH TO DO LIST

Pick blooms to enjoy in your home. Especially striking are the large reticulatas such as 'Harold L. Paige'.

Water camellias as needed to keep them MOIST NOT WET.

Grafting continues this month with scions available from Society members or from your own plants which you wish to propagate. Finding good understock is increasingly difficult to obtain. Continue to pick up ALL camellias blooms in order to help control petal blight.

Do not use camellia flowers in your mulch as this may proliferate the sclerotium that produce the spores which cause petal blight.

Late March, usually about St. Patrick's Day, some camellias begin to "feather out"—new leaves are developing. This signals the plant is breaking out of dormancy and is the beginning of the growth season. When "feathering" occurs it is time for the initial fertilization boost. One excellent boost is fish emulsion (5-1-1) which is a liquid fertilizer which is mixed with water and put around the base of the plant. It may cause a "fishy" smell that lasts a few days. Miracid (30-10-10) can also be used in place of fish emulsion. Please note the high level of nitrogen—the first number listed. Therefore, use it as half strength or you will burn the leaves and perhaps kill the plant. It is a fertilizer that also contains iron and trace minerals which are beneficial to camellias. The key in fertilizing camellias is that too much is a danger.

APRIL

In Southern California the rainy season is over, days are long and warm. This makes for an ideal time to be out in your garden. Now is the season to do the garden projects you have put off.

APRIL TO DO LIST

First on the agenda is to fertilize, especially if you didn't begin in late March. After the initial boost described above, initiate a regular feeding plan. An excellent program is 5 parts cottonseed, 1 part iron and 1 part blood meal every 45 days. Sergio and Elsie Bracci have advocated these proportions and taught Southern Californians this program for years. We owe them our thanks. Local nurseries also sell azalea and camellia fertilizers that may be used. Fertilization continues through early July. When the weather gets hot in August and September, high nitrogen fertilizers should not be applied, especially if your plants are not well established.

Pruning of camellias is done this month as well as in May and June. The key to pruning is to remove dead wood branches that cross each other and other branches and stems that fill up the middle of the plant. When pruning is complete, the plant should look balanced and open in the center.

Water as needed to provide a **MOIST NOT WET** soil mix.

Do that garden project you put off for a sunny day.

This four-month period is the most exciting for the camellia grower in Southern California because we are rewarded with lovely blooms and beautiful new leaves. Spring has arrived, the birds are singing, the winds are warm and sweet. It just doesn't get any better than this!

MAY

Camellia foliage is rich and green and new growth of 6 to 8" may be apparent.

MAY TO DO LIST

Adequate water is needed to sustain new growth. Generally, there is little to no rain in Southern California at this time of the year. Therefore, keep your plants moist but not wet.

Mid-May is the optimal time for

the second application of fertilizer in your feeding program. Fertilize camellias with 5 parts, cottonseed, 1 part iron and 1 part blood meal. Be sure not to over-fertilize and treat non-reticulata hybrids very lightly. Never feed a dry camellia.

A garden clean up is recommended during May. Weeds are to be removed as well as unwanted leaves and other debris should be picked up. Any leftover camellia blooms should be removed from your garden to prevent the spread of petal blight.

JUNE

Through most of the month of June there may be a cloud cover due to a low marine layer. This means that the sun may come out from under the "June gloom" anytime from sunrise to late afternoon. However, even with all the clouds rarely is there any rain.

JUNE TO DO LIST

Continue to water camellia regularly as needed for your location. Remember the camellia gardener's mantra—**MOIST NOT WET!**

This is an excellent time to amend your soil and to put down mulch. Peat moss is readily available but home produced compost is even better. My favorite is bagged oak leaf mold. I feel fortunate when I can buy it. Fir or pine bark is also used for camellia mulch to reduce evaporation of moisture during the summer months. This will also help control the growth of weeds around your plants. Do not cultivate or dig the mulch in as this disturbs the root system. Camellias have extensive surface roots that need to be protected.

JULY

This month begins the summer season which at times can bring very high dry temperatures to Southern California

JULY TO DO LIST

Water is a must for your plants

during this season. A systematic "deep" watering of plants is preferable to frequent "light" watering. The frequency of watering depends on the weather, soil composition, location of plants and the amount of mulch protecting the camellia's root system. The key is to water as often as it takes to keep the soil in your garden moist, but not wet. If your camellias are in pots, continue to water each plant until the water runs out the weep holes at the bottom of the container. Moisture in the soil can be measured by pushing a dry stake in the ground. Moist soil will be attached to the stake when it is withdrawn which will indicate how far down the moisture has penetrated. Moisture should reach the deepest roots of the plant. If you are using lawn sprinklers, camellias may not receive enough water at the deeper levels. Grass roots are 4-6" deep so lawn sprinklers are normally set for 2 to 4 times per week for short periods of time. This type of watering is too shallow for camellias to thrive. The key is to water less frequently but to water deeply.

Continue the fertilization program outlined above. For most growers, this is the last summer fertilization due to the increasingly hot temperatures in late June and through

July and August. If the weather is hot (85° and more) I recommend eliminating the blood meal to the fertilizing mix, especially if your plants are not well established (15 years or more). On the other hand, the older camellias can take fertilizer and hot weather when adequately watered. Non-reticulata hybrids are the most susceptible to over fertilization so special care should be given to reduce the amounts given to them.

AUGUST

At times, August is hot, dry and smoggy in Southern California and all these conditions can be hard on camellias. We can't control the weather, but good culture can help improve their lot!

AUGUST TO DO LIST

Regular deep watering is a must for camellias. they continue to need moist, not wet soil conditions for optimal growth.

In addition, camellias benefit greatly when their foliage is sprinkled with water. Do this watering in the late afternoon or early evening when temperatures remain above 85°. This supplementary watering provides humidity as well as the water needed to sustain robust growth.

EXPERIENCE WITH FAIL SAFE GRAFTING

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

The most commonly used method of camellia grafting is the "cleft graft." Two other grafting methods are available that offer certain advantages to the camellia grower. They are "stem" or whip grafting and "branch" grafting. These are both "fail safe" techniques in that, even if the graft fails, the original plants are still alive. Thomas Lee's article "Fail Safe Grafting" published in the American Camellia Yearbook 2002 is the method I will refer to as "branch grafting." I have followed his approach with excellent results.

BRANCH GRAFTING

In brief, Lee instructs us to place a potted camellia next to an established in-ground camellia in the spring. The potted plant's branch is then attached to the "mother" plant's branch in such a way as to make the potted plant branch grow vertically. Both of the plants are marked at the junction point. A clean cut is made on the "mother" plant so that the smaller branch fits into the cut. The bark is scraped off both branches at the union and the two branches are snugly fitted together. The junction is tightly bound with electrical tape. Lee adds tree cement to make it airtight. I chose to omit this step. In late fall the tape is removed. In spring, about one year into this process, the "mother" plant is pruned leaving just the new graft.

This grafting approach is appealing for a number of reasons. Primarily, it maintains the "mother" plant in the landscape while providing an opportunity to add new varieties. It is possible to have multiple varieties on one plant. It is a "fail safe" way to improve the quality of your collection.

Let me illustrate with the following example. In my garden over the last several years a well-established 'Debutante' has shown more and more variegation. When and

how this occurred is unclear, but it has white blotches on its pink peony-form flowers as well as some yellow stippled leaves. Although this is an undesirable outcome for a show flower, it is an exciting opportunity to try branch grafting. I have been interested in adding a variegated 'Frank Houser' and variegated 'Royal Velvet' to my holdings. However, I also like the shade and beauty the variegated 'Debutante' offers in my yard. This particular 'Debutante' has three separate trunks and many branches. One trunk was left alone to provide shade. The other two trunks were used for grafting the 'Frank Houser' and 'Royal Velvet'.

Because of too much shade, one of my the two 'Frank Houser' was not thriving nor producing big blooms. This plant was dug up, potted and placed next to the 'Debutante' "mother" plant. Two grafts were made during the first week of February 2002. In March 2002, a 'Royal Velvet' which had never taken hold in the ground and had shown poor root development was dug and potted. This was grafted to the third trunk of the "mother" plant.

Since I have a very small yard and still manage to keep 100 camellias, I am aggressive in eliminating problem camellias if they are not robust in appearance and do not bloom profusely.

This "fail safe" grafting method provides motivation and opportunity to solve problems while improving the collection. What could it do to help you? If you and your plants are "mature" well-established specimens in one, three or five-gallon containers, waiting for them to produce sow blooms may not be a good investment. This grafting method may be the way to go. Besides that, it's fun!

Labor Day week weather in September 2002 had dry 100° heat

that selectively damaged camellia leaves in the Los Angeles County and Pomona area. I had six japonicas, one 'Shibori Egao' and one 'Waltz time Variegated' show significant (10 to 40%) leaf damage. This included newer plants which had been in ground for two years to well-established plants with more than 25 years in the ground. The most damage was evident in those plants exposed to afternoon sun. The *reticulatas* showed minimal damage in that only a few leaves showed sunburn.

Tom Nuccio confirmed that Nuccio's nursery had noticed selected leaf damage on their camellias. He reported more damage for plants grown under lathe than under shade cloth. Tom also noted in November that the plants under shade cloth had survived this ordeal. Therefore, I was pleased that none of the grafts I'd attempted showed damage due to this late summer weather anomaly. During October 2002 the 'Frank Houser' had one graft with two variegated leaves and the second graft appeared to be robust in its growth. The 'Royal Velvet' showed less vigorous growth but was surviving.

In November 2002 the electrical tape was removed and revealed good callus on all of the graft sites on the 'Debutante' plant. By spring 2003 (roughly March) the 'Debutante' will be pruned out leaving the 'Frank Houser' and 'Royal Velvet'. The third trunk will remain a 'Debutante'.

STEM GRAFTING

In 1999 and into 2002 I tried the "cleft" graft method on five established 'Pope Pius IX' camellias. Two grafts did well and three failed. The three survivors shot many stems/whips that I pruned so that only two stems remained on each plant on either side of the trunk. I decided this would be a good time to attempt stem grafting.

I purchased three 18-24" potted camellia varieties from Nuccio's Nursery that I had wanted to add to

my collection. Each of the three-gallon pots was set next to a 'Pope Pius IX' plant close enough so that one or two branches from the potted plant could be joined to the whip. The bark of both plants was scrapped off with a sharp knife to reach the white layer and expose the green cambium layer on the edges. The mother plant stem was scrapped about 40% of its diameter but the potted plant only 10%. The two stems were then joined together edge to edge (cambium layer to cambium layer) approximately 4 to 6 inches and then taped together. I have used both electrical adhesive tape and green plastic non-adhesive plant tape. If needed, I also use wire plant ties to gently bend or shape the branches to meet correctly. I secure each pot with a vertical stake or use bricks to keep the pot securely in place. Wind, animals, children or even a gardener's misstep have been known to disrupt the potted plant, so it pays to prevent them being moved. These grafts do not need to be covered and may not grow if covered. The plastic non-adhesive tape is easier to remove without disrupting the callus or breaking the top from the new stems. The adhesive electrical tape is easier to lace the stems together. I have used both types successfully.

The three pots provided six grafts, two on each of the 'Pope Pius IX' plants using the method described above. I regularly examined the grafts and removed any "suckers" that developed that were unrelated to the graft. Despite my best efforts, in June 2002 I discovered that one of the six grafts had dried up.

During November 2002 the tape was removed from the stem grafts and all the remaining grafts were well callused. I now have five grafts and the three original potted plants. This has more than doubled my investment. Not bad in today's bear market!

WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT

Bradford King, Arcadia, California

The program for the March 2002 meeting of the Southern California Camellia Society was a lively panel discussion moderated by Brad King and comprised of Sergio Bracci, JoAnn Brewer and Mel Belcher. The list of the HOT japonica cultivars included 'Carter's Sunburst', 'Royal Velvet', 'Red Hots', 'Tomorrow Park Hill', 'Nuccio's Carousel', 'Hishi-Karito', 'Mrs. George Bell', 'Margaret Davis' and several Elegans specimens such as 'Elegans Splendor', 'Elegans Champagne', 'Shiro Chan' and 'Snow Chan'. The list of "Not Hots" was considerably smaller. Candidates to be used for understock grafted were most frequently based on varieties which are not doing well in a particular garden. For example, Sergio Bracci puts 'Moonlight Bay' at the top of his list, Older varieties that are no longer show winners, such as 'Mathotiana', 'Pope Pious' and 'White Nun' were other candidates for understock.

There was high agreement among the panel members on the reticulatas they prefer to grow and show, including (from top to bottom of their lists) 'Harold L. Paige', 'Emma Gaeta Variegated', 'Larry Peit', 'Margaret Hilford', 'Frank Houser', 'John Hunt' and 'Linda Carroll'. Some of the panelists also liked 'Dr. Clifford Parks', 'Queen Bee', 'Curtain Call' and 'Dobro'. Favorites among the non reticulata hybrids were 'Spring Daze', 'Nicky Crisp', 'Kramers Fluted Coral', 'Coral Delight', 'Lucky Star', 'Debbie', 'First Blush', 'Waltz Time Variegated', 'Freedom Bell' and 'Buttons 'N Bows'. The panelists agreed that the best specie cultivars for showing because they so frequently win are 'Egao', 'Grady's Egao' and 'Shibori Egao', 'Yuletide', 'Botan-Yuki' and 'Star Above Star'.

When the panel was asked about their favorites among the newer cultivars there was a variety of

recommendations. Sergio likes 'Autumn Jewel' and 'Jack Pot'. Mel suggested 'W.P. Gilley' not withstanding its rangy and unattractive growth style. JoAnn added that 'Grace Albritton' has finally proven itself to her. I would add 'Tama Peacock' as a small variety and 'Junior Prom' for a large white/blush japonica.

What piece of wisdom can be passed along to other growers? Mel Belcher stressed the importance of careful attention to the root system and reminded us that at least half the plant is underground and requires care as much as the portion that shows. For this he suggested using organic fertilizers and quality mulch. Sergio Bracci reinforced the importance of a consistent fertilization program and appropriate watering—avoid over-watering which produces soggy soil. He also said it was important not to let the plants dry out. It was noted that, when watering potted plants, water should be allowed to run out the bottom of the pot. JoAnn Brewer follows "the Bracci Culture Program" which she learned from the late Bob Jaacks. In Southern California this program begins with the application of fish emulsion between St. Patrick's Day and April Fool's Day when the plant begins to "feather out" or to show new growth indicating dormancy has broken. All the panelists agreed that the application of fish emulsion should be followed up in two weeks with 4 parts cottonseed, 1 part iron and 1 part blood meal every 45 days. JoAnn and I are particularly concerned about summer heat and fertilize less than Sergio and Mel as the summer heats up. My plants are smaller and less established than Sergio's and Mel's; therefore, I reduce the blood meal as the summer progresses and eliminate it entirely by the fourth feeding in

August. Mel begins the feedings of 2-10-10 fertilizer in September, but I start in October. The key is to assist bud setting and bud growth but not to force new growth of leaves.

The audience raised a number of very interesting questions which stimulated a lively discussion. A sample of questions and the responses follows:

Q What causes "bull nosing" when the flower buds up, but only partially opens?

A A combination of plant location, light, temperature and genetics. Sergio said, "Unless there is sufficient light and warmth, certain cultivars don't readily open up."

Q When and how do you take the cover off a new graft?

A Sergio suggested waiting until the new graft has sprouted new leaves. He carefully allows more light by cutting small holes in the shade cloth or paper placed around the graft and adds new holes every two days for up to ten days. If the plant shows wilt or signs of collapse the cover should immediately be placed back over it.

The panel agreed that they do not usually water new grafts as the cover over it recirculates the moisture. Fungus sets in when the graft receives too much water and causes the graft to fail.

Q What camellias do well in the landscape garden?

A First to be considered is the location. Is it in full sun or partial shade? In sun the species listed earlier in this article are all excellent choices. Added to those would be 'Shisha Gashira', 'Dazzler', 'Bonanza' and 'Double Rainbow' for landscaping choices. When planted in partial shade most of the japonicas would make excellent choices. The list provided by the panel is a good place to begin. However, a few not mentioned that are readily available in several sizes at nurseries are 'Wildfire', 'Adolphe Audusson Variegated', 'Pink Perfection', 'Guillio Nuccio Variegated', 'Herme', 'Katie' and 'Katie Variegated'. If there is high sunlight and you want a japonica, you can't miss with 'Debutante' or 'Ace of Hearts'.

'TAMA-NO-URA' AND ITS PROGENY

Bradford King, Arcadia, California

In 1973 'Tama-no-ura', a red C. japonica seedling with a wide band of white was discovered in Japan. It came to the USA in 1978 where Nuccio's nursery began growing it. The bloom is a small to medium single with a tendency to hang its head (bloom face down). This is its only draw back as the flower is bright red with a natural (non-virus) white border. The plant grows quickly, has slender branches and an upright growth. It makes an excellent landscape or potted plant. While listed as a midseason bloomer, it is early to midseason for me in the Los Angeles County Arboretum area of Southern California. I grow it in partial shade as a landscape plant next to 'Shishi-Gashira', which gets more sun.

'Tama-no-ura' has been used to develop a number of picotied or white-bordered blossoms. The white border is part of the genetic heritage. Nuccios has developed nine seedlings to date that are all colorful red and white but have various forms and sizes.

The first was introduced in 1991 and aptly named 'Merry Christmas'. This medium brilliant red with a white border has a single to semi-double flower. It is a larger flower than its parent and keeps its "face up." It makes an excellent choice for a Christmas gift as it often is in full bloom.

Nuccio's Nurseries introduced seven Tama varieties in 1993. Six of them can be seen on the cover of The Camellia Review, Vol.55 Issue 2. They are 'Tama Americana', 'Tama Bambino', 'Tama Beauty', 'Tama Electra', 'Tama Glitters' and 'Tama Vino'. 'Tama Bell' was not included on the cover.

This cover inspired me to select my favorite Tama. I really like the brilliant red and white border of

'Tama Electra'. The two-gallon plant was potted up in 1998 to a five-gallon. I enjoyed the number of bud sets and plant growth but was disappointed in the bloom. It bloomed regularly as a small brilliant red, but little or no white border. A number of other Southern California Society members reported similar results. I doggedly decided to stay with it. In 1999 after previously blooming all red flowers I put my 'Tama Electra' in the ground. Well it paid off! In December 2001 and January 2002 all blooms were brilliant red with nice size white borders.

Why? Genetics? Culture? Two significant changes can be reported. First, as noted above, it was planted in the ground two seasons ago. Second, my fertilization program this year included more iron. It is well documented that iron improves color intensity especially in reds.

Is this growing season different than past seasons? Many of my japonicas bloomed early this year. This season 'Tama Electra' began blooming in late December and had finished blooming completely by the end of January.

This leads me to tentatively conclude that 'Tama Electra' needs time to "grow" into its "adult plumage"—those genetics that bring the red with a white border. Iron certainly helped the red be brilliant. Good culture including a fertilization program helped produce plant growth, bud set and quality blooms, but it seems unlikely that my personal culture program caused this year's results.

Will this 'Tama Electra' acclimatize to the landscape and bloom reliably year in and year out? Only time will tell!

In 1999 I received a two gallon 'Tama Peacock', the most recent of the Nuccio 'Tama' releases, as a birthday

gift. The bloom is a lovely maroonish red that washes into a white border. The flower is tubular, semi-double and small to medium in size. To date the young plant is a reliable upright bloomer with thin drooping branches. It is planted in shade next to 'Tama Electra'. They make very good companions. Mr. & Mrs. Julius Christinson with 'Tama Peacock' won the best small single japonica at the Pacific Camellia Society Camellia

Show, the first show of the 2002 season in Southern California. This was the first win for 'Tama Peacock' in Southern California. Will it continue its winning ways?

The delightful natural color breaks of all nine Tama varieties bring variety to a camellia collection. They look good as landscape plants and are proving their potential to win blue ribbons in the shows.

PRETTY IN PINK

Bradford King, Arcadia, California

She may be small and petite or large and robust, but pink japonica camellias are always beautiful. Some friends moved to a new house that needed landscaping and wanted color all winter. The northeast side of their house was selected as an ideal location for camellias and we discussed a number of color schemes. My friends decided to use one color for continuity and flow and selected a favorite color—pink. "What would you recommend" she asked? I suggested ten varieties that would grow and bloom in Southern California. The use of varieties with different flowering periods and others with long blooming periods was stressed. For early to midseason flowers three species were recommended. 'Debutante', an old favorite that grows well in an upright form and has a light medium full peony form, was an easy choice.

The large formal double 'Elizabeth Weaver' made a fine number two pick. My friend also wanted a dramatic very large pink so 'Katie' seemed ideal. 'Katie' is also a vigorous, compact upright plant. Three midseason pinks that would do well in the landscape came to mind. 'Magnoliaeflora' with its profusion of blush pink medium semi-double flowers and compact growth made the list. We added 'Tiffany', a light orchid pink to deeper

pink, is a large to very large loose peony form flower and grows well in an upright pattern. The medium formal double 'Nuccio's Pearl' with its orchid pink whitewashed flowers and vigorous, compact upright growth also fit the bill.

We also discussed the length of blooming season. These new camellia enthusiasts clearly wanted species with the longest possible booming season and four more pinks that do well in our area came to mind.—'Nuccio's Cameo', 'Nuccio's Carousel', 'Carter's Sunburst' and 'Pink Perfection'. 'Nuccio's Cameo' is a medium to large formal double and 'Pink Perfection' is a small formal double. 'Nuccio's Carousel' is a soft pink toned, deeper pink toward the edges in a large semidouble tubular flower. The pale pink striped with darker pink of 'Carter's Sunburst' with its large to very large flower also appealed to them. With this list of ten in hand, my friends made plans to visit Nuccio's Nurseries where all of these varieties are available.

As I fell asleep that night, in my mind's eye I looked ahead three years when the glossy green foliage and lovely pink flowers of these plants were softening and enhancing my friends' new home. Yes! Camellias are so pretty in pink.

PARALLEL PROCESSES

Bradford King, Arcadia, California

The act of gardening puts the gardener in a relationship with plants. Human relationships especially parenting have significant parallels to gardening. On the positive side they both have potential for love, beauty and growth. On the other hand mistakes can derail, inhibit and lead to pain and suffering. As I analyze the errors in how we relate to plants or children they fit two broad categories—lack of knowledge and lack of caring understanding.

Lack of knowledge

The lack of information and knowledge is relatively easy to correct by talking to people with more experience, reading, and attending classes or lectures. Let me illustrate this point. We need to know how much sun a particular camellia needs to grow and produce flowers. A new camellia Japonica graft is like a human infant—neither can thrive in full hot sun without shade. The "good enough" parent or gardener won't leave either out in the sun unprotected. An older and more mature plant or person doesn't require as much protection.

Children need proper "culture" such as clear limits and love to develop healthy self-esteem. Camellias need proper "culture" such as moisture at all times, but not being continually wet. They need a well-drained mix high in humus. In point of fact both are hardy and can adapt to various mixes. When one finds a personal mix that promotes growth, it's best to stay with it. Drastic changes produce stress in both children and camellias.

Lack of a Caring Understanding

The lack of real appreciation and a caring sense of understanding the needs of children or plants are more complicated problem. Children and plants don't bloom if they are

neglected when they are young and dependent on us for care. A camellia with proper water, sun and a moderate use of cottonseed meal or a commercial fertilizer used from April through September every 6 to 8 weeks will grow and bloom. Children require much more attention on a daily basis to develop. They require more than proper amounts of water and food. Children thrive best with large amounts of love, physical exercise, gentle touches and sensitive talk for their personalities to bloom. Lack of appropriate limits produces unruly growth in children and plants. A camellia that is pruned and disbudded to one terminal bud will produce lovely flowers on a robust and well-groomed plant. Children without appropriate limits act up, have difficulty in school and have relationship problems. On the other hand children who have had opportunities to decide for themselves within age appropriate boundaries feel secure and have positive self-esteem. It's like a camellia grown in a pot. The right size pot accommodates independent growth of the roots but it must not be so large that the soil becomes a haven for fungus and root rot. Too much water leads to root rot in camellias, but too much anger, sarcasm and degradation damages a child's foundation. Too much fertilizer produces burned leaves or worse in camellias. Too much alcohol, drugs and violence leaves children (adults too) burned out and damaged physically, mentally and spiritually.

However when we have knowledge and a caring sense of understanding of camellias and children we contribute to their growth and development. We are rewarded with joy, pride and admiration for their strength and beauty as they continue to bloom year after year.

SEARCHING FOR BIG RED

Bradford King, Arcadia, California

Bill Woodroof is frequently quoted as saying, "If it isn't big and red it's not a camellia." While these may be fighting words to many, it is certainly true that a bloom 5 or more inches in size and a rich red color is a spectacular sight in the garden, floating in a bowl or at the head table. Have we reached the perfect large red camellia? In 1978 the initial awards of the William Woodroof Camellia Hall of Fame were made. Ten camellias were selected; half of them were large red japonicas. Listed alphabetically they are 'Grand Prix', 'Giulio Nuccio', 'Kramers Supreme', 'Mathotiana Supreme', and 'Reg Ragland'. These old favorites periodically make it to the show but generally have given way to newer varieties. In Don Bergamini's 1999 article (this Journal vol. 61, #1) only 'Grand Prix' made the top 20. Specifically 'Grand Prix' ranked 3rd in the 1980's, but went down to 16th in the 1990's.

In 1983 the two Hall of Fame awards went to 'Dr. Clifford Parks' and 'Wildfire'. 'Dr. Clifford Parks' is a very large red, semi double, loose peony to full peony or anemone form. This reticulata is still showing well (Bergamini has it #2 in the 80's and #3 in the 90's).

'Wildfire' is a semi double red japonica that still holds its own in shows. Bergamini has it in #4 and #5, respectively, in the 80's and 90's. However, as a medium bloom it doesn't make it into the top 5 for big and red.

A case could be made for 'Grand Slam', which joined the Woodroof Hall of Fame in 1984. It's a brilliant dark red, large to very large semi double to anemone form. Bergamini has it ranked 8th in the 80's down to 11th in the 90's. It seems it has lost some of its popularity. In part this may be due to how difficult it is to transport as it shatters easily. My best ones seem to be on the plant and not

even in my transporting box. As Marilee Gray says, "The 'Grand Slam' is the boom as it hits the ground."

At the top of the list of big red camellias would have to be 'Harold L. Paige'. It's a very large red rose form double peony form reticulata. When you see one of Sergio and Elsie Bracci's at the head table, it's a beautiful sight. It makes you recall Bill Woodroof big and red mantra. Bergamini rates 'Harold L. Paige' as #1 in the 80's and #4 in the 90's.

In 1989 three camellias were inducted into the Woodroof Hall of Fame. They are all excellent cultivars that continue to be show winners. However, none are big and red. First is 'Emma Gaeta', which is a deep rose pink reticulata. Bergamini rates the variegated form #1 for the 1990's, but it's not a red bloom. Second is the bright red non-reticular hybrid 'Freedom Bell'. It's a winner, but a small flower. Third is 'Katie', a very large salmon rose pink. It's an excellent japonica that has the size and shows well, but doesn't have the red color.

'Grand Marshal', one of my personal favorites, was selected in 1998 to the Hall of Fame. It's a rich deep red that shows best in its full peony form. While listed as a medium to large flower we show it in the medium japonica class. Bergamini reports a rating of #5 for the 1990's in the japonica medium class and listed it as a winner four times in 2000.

'Red Hots' is a small brilliant red flower. It is an excellent addition to ones collection. It became a frequent winner in the 1990's (Bergamini's #2 rating). Like 'Freedom Bell', 'Red Hots' is just too little for Bill Woodroof.

On the other hand, 'Royal Velvet' meets his criterion. It's a dark velvet red semi double large blooming japonica. It made it to the Hall of Fame in 1999 and is a winner. It is ranked #1 in the 1990's and had the

most victories (seven) as a single entry in the large/very large japonicas according to Bergamini.

In order to receive consideration to be selected into the Hall of Fame a cultivar must have been available in Southern California for at least ten years

There are two large camellias not in the Hall of Fame that are big and red and deserve serious consideration to the Hall of Fame or as an addition to anyones collection. First is 'Larry Piet' introduced in 1989. It is a rich red large to very large rose form double to peony form. This reticulata was ranked #2 in the Bergamini Survey for the 1990's. Personally I like 'Frank Houser' just as well. Bergamini found it ranked #12 in the 1990's, but it seems to be moving up in wins. In Bergamini's article (Camellia Review vol.61, page 9) listing the 1999 winners 'Frank Houser' was a winner 11 times to 5 times for 'Larry Piet'. In his listing of 2000 winners (Bergamini's Camellia Review vol.61 #1 page 11) 'Frank Houser' had 5 wins to 4 for 'Larry Piet'.

The newest candidate for the best big red is 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa'. Nuccio's Nurseries introduced this large red formal double japonica this year. In my search for big red, I purchased two the first week they went on sale to the public. Several years ago Jim and Tom Nuccio showed my wife and me this cultivar

in bloom. We fell in love with the flower. This meant removing a very good 'Bob Hope'—never a show winner—to make room for my new purchases. Is the 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa' the one to end the search for big red? Time and experience will tell, but I'm prepared with two in the ground. I highly recommend adding it to your collection and expect it to become a winner. Sergio Bracci told an interesting story about 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa'. He and Elsie took a two gallon plant to a recent camellia meeting in the Southeast where it was put up for auction. The auctioneer cut the bidding war off at \$300.00 although three people were still bidding. Well, you can get one at a more reasonable price at Nuccio's Nurseries.

My current top five big red Camellias in order are:

1. 'Harold L. Paige'
2. 'Frank Houser'
3. 'Royal Velvet'
4. 'Larry Piet'
5. 'Grand Marshal'

A favorite small red is 'Red Hots'. My two favorite medium red japonicas are 'Grand Marshal' (medium to large bloom) and 'Wildfire'.

Will 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa' join the list of top five big red Camellias after this season? Will the search for big red end there or is some seedling being secretly grown that will end our search?

DESCANSO CAMELLIA FESTIVAL

Brad King, Arcadia, California

The joint meeting of the Southern California Camellia Society and the Pacific Camellia Society kicked off the second annual Descanso Garden Camellia Festival held February 24th through the 27th.

Sergio Bracci presented a life achievement award to Ralph Peer, which was accepted by his son Ralph Peer, II for his pioneering work in bringing Camellias to the United States.

Robert Ehrhart, past president of the American Camellia Society and a camellia enthusiast, gave the keynote address. Bob's talk was amusing, interesting, and informative. He began his lively speech with jokes like this..."The two most frequent fears are public speaking and dying. If that's true, then the one in the casket would be considered better off."

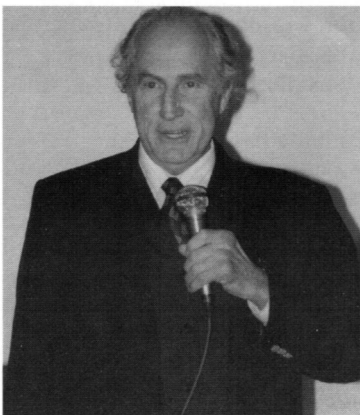
He informed us that he has about 10 camellias in the ground and 2,600 in pots because the natural soil in his garden is adobe—too hard for planting. A very successful grower, Bob uses a coarse loose container mix of fir bark, perlite, and dolomite.

This provides excellent drainage and thereby controls root rot. He waters 5-7 minutes every third day in the summer and every fourth day when it's cool.

I also found his list of favorite Camellias very interesting and helpful. If you want show winners, Bob's top ten are:

1. 'Junior Prom'
2. 'Royal Velvet'
3. 'Royal Velvet Variegated'
4. 'Ruta Hagmann'
5. 'Linda Carol'
6. 'Frank Houser Variegated'
7. 'Angel Wings'
8. 'Phyllis Hunt'
9. 'Lady Pamela'
10. 'Queen Bee'

I left inspired and purchased 'Shibori Egao' root stock to graft and make a 'Royal Velvet Variegated' and a 'Frank Houser Variegated'. My wife Lynn's notes were used extensively for this article so I'd like to thank her publicly. I'd also like to ask her: If Bob has 2,600 camellias may I please have ten more camellias in pots and have more than the limit of 100 I promised?



Bob Ehrhart, Camellia Hobbyist
Extraordinaire



Bob Ehrhart with Camellia Society Presidents
David Trujillo (Pomona) Brad King (Southern
Cal) and Tom Gilfoy (Pacific)

COLOR FROM SEPTEMBER TO APRIL

Bradford King, Arcadia, California

When you want beautiful flowers from September into April the camellia is the plant for you. This evergreen shrub or small tree is great in the landscape with lovely foliage all year long. It can be easily grown in small spaces. A single specimen can bring color to an uninteresting section of the yard. A small (3 to 7) collection of container plants can bring life to your patio or deck. Blooms can be cut and placed in a bowl for a table decoration. If you like competition, your flowers can be entered in a camellia show. Best of all, you can have flowers for eight months of the year if you select varieties based on their typical blooming period.

Fall

Fall is the season for the Camellia Sasanqua or its close relatives Hiemalis and Vernalis. In general, these species require more sunlight than Japonicas or Reticulatas, so plan accordingly. The Sasanquas welcome the camellia flowering season with small but prolific blooms. Horticulturists from Asian countries enjoy the lovely petals covering the ground when the flower is spent. I heartily agree when I view a carpet of pink petals covering my garden or one of its paths.

What camellias should I choose for

early color? My personal favorites for Southern California blooms in September and October are 'Hugh Evans', 'Bonanza' and 'Dazzler'. 'Hugh Evans' is a tall growing Sasanqua. It can reach seven feet or more when mature, but it is easily pruned to keep it under control. Its biggest selling point is the literal profusion of single pink flowers. It has reliably bloomed for me in Arcadia as early as late August usually peaking in October depending on the climate. The attractive small dark foliage and deep red semidouble form flowers make 'Bonanza' a strong choice for early color. This medium size shrub bears medium size flowers making it a standout in the landscape for several months.

Nuccio's nursery introduced 'Dazzler' to the Camellia world. The plant is a vigorous grower with a spreading habit. The flower is a medium semidouble rose red. The petals are lightly waved. When in full bloom it really lives up to its name. I won 'Bert Jones' in the Southern California Camellia Society plant raffle several years ago. It is a strong growing Sasanqua which is quickly providing a screen for the air conditioner. I much prefer to see and smell the fragrant blooms of 'Bert Jones' than a piece of equipment. The

flowers are medium to large and very fragrant. Each bloom is a lovely rich rose pink. The center may have a mass of mixed pink petaloids and golden stamens. The blooming period is long—from November into early January.

My favorite *Hiemalis* is 'Shishi-Gashira'. It grows as a neat, attractive compact shrub which reaches four or five feet tall in height. It reliably throws many small semidouble to rose form red flowers. It's outstanding in the landscape and is does well as a container specimen. I enjoy looking at it from a bedroom window most of November, December and into January year in and year out.

The species *Vernalis* has three absolutely outstanding varieties that bloom December and January. The winners in the species class of the camellia shows are most frequently one of these three—'Egao', 'Shibori-Egao' or 'Star Above Star'. These cultivars can be grown for personal pleasure in the landscape and be successfully shown in competition. 'Egao' produces medium to large semi-double deep rose pink flowers. My five year old plant grows straight and is five feet tall. It was in full bloom with 30-50 flowers during December. While I was disappointed it bloomed too early for the shows. I privately enjoyed it (see picture). The variegated form of 'Egao' is the absolutely lovely 'Shibori-Egao'. The deep rose and white petals are big winners in the garden and at the shows. The plant has green and white leaves and a weeping form. The species that wins for me at shows is 'Star Above Star'. The bloom is very different and unique in form. The bloom is a white shading to lavender pink at the edges. It is medium-sized semidouble. The petals have crinkled edges and are arranged in star shaped layers one above the other. These blooms don't travel well to shows. Therefore, I always pick the morning of a show. I hope three or four hold together to make a tray of three and a

single entry. On occasion, I have had a box of seven or eight and could only get one to the tables for judging. This cultivar is fairly late for a species and usually blooms in December, January and perhaps into February in Southern California.

Winter:

The winter months are when *Camellia Japonica* and *Camellia Reticulata* take center stage. The japonicas typically have glossy dark green foliage which makes them attractive all year long. *Reticulata* leaves are less glossy and sometimes a duller green. The plants have a more open even sparse growth habit. What they may lack in growth habits is made up by the large flowers.

Some of the japonicas bloom early—November and December—to mid season—January and February. I would recommend 'Wildfire' as the best red camellia in this category. The blossoms are a nice clear red, medium size and semidouble. Heavy blooms can occur in a mid-sized plant. It is an excellent landscape plant and will win at shows. If you prefer a small to medium bright red flower, you can't miss with 'Red Hots'. The bloom is tubular and petals are pointed. It grows upright and compact with dark green foliage and looks good in the landscape. It is increasing its winning ways at shows. If you want a medium formal double white, the choice would be 'Nuccio's Gem'. It blooms early to mid season. It is a truly beautiful flower.

If you really like formal double flowers and are looking for a pink bloom there are two good choices—'Elizabeth Weaver' and 'Nuccio's Cameo'. They are both a coral pink. 'Nuccio's Cameo' is a medium to large flower and 'Elizabeth Weaver' is a large one. On the other hand if you like large semi-double flowers in a tubular form that have pink tones, then 'Nuccio's Carousel' would be a good choice.

It's impossible not to mention an

old favorite. 'Debutante' is a light pink full peony form. This medium flower grows on a tall sun-tolerant shrub that is a reliable bloomer. In my garden it is reaching nine feet so pruning is needed. However, I have found pruning reduces the quantity of blooms with little improvement in quality of individual flowers. I recommend this camellia for a moderately sunny area in the garden with a minimum of pruning to get a colorful garden display rather than as a flower that will win at a show.

We now move to the mid-season—January and February—for Southern California. There are abundant choices of Japonicas and Reticulatas that are worth growing. For most of us the problem is deciding where to find room for them. We are confounded with choices about color, size, and form. What do you like? I prefer medium, large and very large blooms so I will focus on them rather than small or miniatures. I want a fighting chance to get to the head table. I like variegated, blush and tone on tone white flowers but not a plain white flower. I prefer a plant that looks good, I want cultivars that grow well for me in Arcadia (Los Angeles Arboretum area) of Southern California. My soil is moderately heavy but drains well. These are my preferences and biases which impact my recommendations. Let's start by using color . . .

Red:

My two top Japonicas would be 'Royal Velvet' and 'Grand Marshal'. 'Royal Velvet' is a large dark red semidouble flower introduced by Nuccio's in 1987. 'Grand Marshal' was also introduced by Nuccio's one year later. This deep rich red medium to large flower is best, in my opinion, in its peony form. It has an anemone form that is also desirable. The three Reticulatas at the top of my list are 'Larry Piet', 'Dr. Clifford Parks' and 'Frank Houser'. 'Larry Piet' is a large

to very large dark red rose form to peony form. It was developed by Piet and Gaeta in 1989. It is not found in local nurseries so it may be hard to find. 'Dr. Clifford Parks' is a very large red semidouble rose form to peony form. Dr. Parks developed it at the Los Angeles County Arboretum in Arcadia. 'Frank Houser' is a very large semidouble to peony form red bloom that was introduced in 1989. It is seen increasingly on the Trophy Table.

Red/White (Variegated):

Two Japonica selections are frequent head table winners. 'Firedance Variegated' is a deep red and white developed in 1993 by Nuccio's. This is a medium semidouble flower. 'Margaret Davis' is a white/cream with lovely rose red lines edged in Vermilion. It is also a medium but has a full peony form. My top choice of Reticulatas is 'Emma Gaeta Variegated'. This deep rose pink blotched white very large semidouble flower with folded, upright petals is very striking. Its growth habit is a drawback for landscaping. It looks like a thin gangly adolescent most of the time.

Pink:

The medium blush pink Japonica 'Magnoliaeflora' is chosen for its profuse blooms and lovely semidouble flower. The Japanese call it "Hagoromo." It dates back to Italy in 1886 and has earlier historical roots in Japan. The pink Reticulatas that stand out are 'LASCA Beauty' and 'Valentine Day'. 'LASCA Beauty' is a very large soft pink with textured thick petals in a semidouble form. Dr. Clifford Parks developed it in 1973 using the first letters of Los Angeles State and County Arboretum to name this beauty. It has a vigorous, open and upright growth. While 'Valentine Day' grows slowly, it's a formal large to very large double with a rosebud center which makes it an outstanding flower.

Spring:

In order to get color in March and April you would need to choose some of the cultivars in this section. In Southern California you will also need help from Mother Nature. When it gets hot and dry your last blossoms may be March. If your climate is like Descanso Gardens in La Canada where it is cooler and perhaps more humid flowers are present through April and beyond. The varieties I like for the mid to late blooming season are 'Nuccio's Pearl'; 'Nuccio's Jewel', 'Spring Daze' and 'Miss Charleston Variegated'.

'Spring Daze' is a Saluenensis hybrid. The flower is small to medium blush pink edged coral pink. Its form is formal double to rose form. 'Nuccio's Pearl' is a medium formal double white shading to pink. 'Nuccio's Jewel' is a medium full Peony form. Its color also is white shaded to pink. If you like red and white, 'Miss Charleston Variegated' is a good choice. 'Miss Charleston

Variegated' is deep red, blotched white. It is a large semidouble to formal double. If you are looking for large and red, you can't miss with

'Harold L. Paige', a very large red Reticulata. The rose form double to peony form makes it very attractive. It has vigorous, spreading growth.

Two very large pink Reticulatas may continue to bloom in March and April. 'Queen Bee' is an irregular semidouble soft pink flower. 'John Hunt' is also semidouble but can have a loose peony form to rose form. Both of these cultivars grow upright and grow well. 'John Hunt' is more open in its growth habits.

In conclusion, the growing and showing of camellia flowers is a terrific way to spend leisure time. The beauty of colorful flowers from Fall through Winter to Spring brightens the landscape and can enlighten the hobbyist's heart, mind and spirit.



Southern Cal's President Brad King presents camellia seedlings grown by Bob Ehrhart to new members Beth Stone, Scott Drumheller, Jac Fagundo and Libby Lent

COLOR OR COLOUR

Bradford King

It depends on where you were educated. In America we spell it "color." In the British Education System, which would include Australia and New Zealand, it's 'colour.' Differences in perspectives across people and countries are numerous. They can lead to disagreements and conflicts but can also provide opportunities for dialogue and discussion. In the *Camellia News*, The Journal of the Australian Camellia Research Society #149 June, 1999 page 17, Terrence E. Pierson is highly critical of how the USA and the Southern California Camellia Society Nomenclature publication describes camellia colors. Let me quote Mr. Pierson:

"Why are descriptions of the colour of new registrants so nebulous and vague, particularly those originating in the USA? Surely we can do better, and we must if societies are to retain any credibility and scientific repute as the international registrars of the Camellia genus."

Mr. Pierson reports that the Australian Camellia Research Society requires that new cultivar registration use either the RHS colour chart or Methuen book. He reports "New Zealand uses the RHS chart but the USA flatly refuses to use a colour chart, insisting on the use of language descriptions . . ." The solution is described by Mr. Pierson and I quote: "Modern technology has given us a way to surmount this problem. It is available worldwide, yes, at a price I admit and it will require some inconvenience in its implementations but it will allow the reduction of colour to a question of mathematics. . .

we will have a series of numbers defining the depth and intensity of colour across the entire petal . . ."

While I applaud Mr. Pierson's attempt to be rational, objective and scientific, I find his recommended mathematical solutions as opposed to a language description untenable for the public and most camellia enthusiasts. I can easily translate colour to color and be fully tuned to what is meant because this is all a left brain function. Mathematics is a right brain function while language is left brain. Most people (even outside the USA?) are not motivated to use numbers for color and some of us are so left brain endowed or educated we are unable to perceive color in mathematical terms.

If we adopted a mathematical description of color for use in the Southern California Camellia Society Nomenclature, we would "throw the baby out with the bathwater" to use a vivid verbal phrase. However, Mr. Pierson is correctly pointing out that the use of color charts or a mathematical description can be useful in scientific research. This and other uses can and should be explored further.

I would also agree that new technology like digital photography and digital cameras can be helpful. As we say in America, "A picture is worth a thousand words." This is still a more comprehensible description than $A + B - Z = X$, especially for all of us left-brainers. *Editor's note: Dr. Brad King is a psychologist associated with the University of Southern California as Director of Counselling.*

In order to succeed, you must know what you are doing, like what you are doing, and believe in what you are doing.

—Will Rogers

CAMELLIA SHOW JUDGING

Bradford King

As a relatively new Southern California Camellia Society Show Judge, I have generally been favorably impressed with the judging at the shows. When I look at one of my own blooms, picked at home as a winner and compare it to its sister bloom that made it to the Head Table, I have to agree with the judges.

I do occasionally find a third place bloom that doesn't look any better than a bloom rated as an "also ran." Since the best flower did go forward to the Head Table, I say "Live and let live." When my 'Adolphe Audusson Variegated' is as close to perfect as it can be grown makes it to the Head Table, I'm pleased. When the Head Table judges send it back I feel disappointed. However, when I scan the remaining Head Table entries of large and very large Japonicas, I must admit they belong ahead of my 'Adolphe Audusson Variegated'. This variety just isn't "large enough," "complicated enough," or "good enough" to stand up to its competitors in this class. The Head Table crew is doing its job.

Can we now rest on our laurels and stop improving judging techniques? Of course not! We seek

the unobtainable—perfection in judging. How do we keep improving? There is one tried and true method. It is taught in every graduate school to social scientists in various fields who use raters and judges of all kinds of scientific variables. The answer is to improve raters through training and education and, specifically, to increase our judges' knowledge of camellias by practicing their judging techniques and comparing the judges' ratings with one another in order to increase reliability. This is how we seek to make judges consistent with one another over a time and subject matter.

When do we do this? January 8, 2000 (Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Descanso Gardens is the Southern California Judges' Symposium. This symposium is chaired by Marilee Gray, who is herself an outstanding camellia grower and a very knowledgeable and enthusiastic teacher. Other expert camellia judges will join her in presenting this program. This symposium is a MUST for maintaining and improving judging for the novice as well as the expert. PLEASE JOIN US!

MY GARDEN

Bradford D. King

How do you view your garden? There are as many lenses as there are people. My two favorite views are through “windows” and a “walk about.”

Windows

High tech people will assume I'm speaking about the Microsoft “Windows.” However, years before Bill Gates our ancestors wanted sun light to illuminate and warm the interiors of their homes as well as to look out into their environment.

When I awake and see the sun rise from the bedroom window I also see ‘Kramer’s Supreme’ with its turkey gobbler red blooms directly under the window. This year the mites have decreased the number of buds and the flowers are small. In November I sprayed with “sun oil” so I look forward to more buds and larger flowers next season.

As I focus my eyes to the right, the full pink peony blooms of ‘Debutante’ are easily seen. To the left appears the newly-planted ‘Margaret’s Joy’ (a gift from Julius Christinson) and ‘Maroon and Gold’ named by Jude Nuccio to commemorate the University of Southern California. Jude told me he couldn’t use other USC names due to trademark infringements laws, the color remind me that’s where I work.

When I look further out from this window three profuse blooming Sasanquas are seen—‘Shishi Gashira’, ‘Jean May’ and, in a sunny corner, ‘Hugh Evans’. While ‘Hugh Evans’ requires some pruning to keep it from growing too large, ‘Jean May’ and ‘Shishi Gashira’ need little care in the landscape.’

Looking at camellias is a beautiful way to begin the day! Code, our

Lhasa Apso, is not so patiently waiting to be let out the sliding doors. Letting the door out gives me the opportunity to look at the back yard where I seen seven Bonsai trees placed on a curve bench and a bed of evergreen daylilies with only an occasional flower this time of year. Five ‘Pope Pius IX’ with their profuse formal double red blooms are in the background. Even though I pruned them last March they are six feet tall and are on the “to do” pruning list this year.

I’m now ready to pick up the morning paper in the driveway. It is a pleasure to be greeted by my wife Lynn’s garden full of pansies, begonias and primrose—their pretty faces look up at me as the California sunrise falls on my back. This perennial garden bed has five ‘Yuletide’ sasanguas as a backdrop. The numerous single red blooms are a delight to see. As I return to the house I pass a pink Dogwood and a mass planting of daylilies which soften the look of a short concrete wall separating our yard from the neighbors.

As I read the paper and sip coffee, I frequently look out the window to see white ‘Nuccio’s Masterpiece’ and ‘Alaska’ azaleas under the window. When I’m lucky, a perfect ‘Wildfire’ bloom looks back at me. To the side I see a number of ‘Adolphe Audusson Variegated’ blooms. These large red and white flowers are a reminder that a row of alternating red and red/white camellias naturalize the front of the house. In 1993 I decided on this red and red/white theme. In my mind’s eye I can see the rest of this bed—‘Grand Prix’, ‘Glen 40 Variegated’, ‘Glen 40’, ‘Star-above-

Star' and 'Bob Hope'. This planting and the house are shaded by a full grown Birch and a fuschia-flowering Crepe Myrtle tree which provide great color in the summer.

By the time I finish the paper and pour myself a second cup of coffee, it's time for an early morning "walk about."

Walk About

During the week my "walk about" needs to be in the mornings as it's dark when I return home from work—at least during camellia season.

Still in pajamas and bathrobe (see Lynn King's article on page 8) with coffee in hand, I begin my walk about. I find this a relaxing way to begin the day. In summer I stop to smell the roses but, during camellia season, I pick up pruning shears to harvest blooms for the house and to bring to work. Yesterday, for example, I picked 'San Dimas', 'Nuccio's Pink Lace', 'Rudolph Variegated', 'Firedance Variegated', 'Guilio Nuccio Variegated' and a 'Sawada's Dream' for the house. I saw a few 'Tama-No-Ura', 'Egao', 'Grady's

Egao' and smelled a fragrant 'Bert Jones'. Three gibbed blooms—'Grand Prix', 'Katie Variegated' and 'Mathotiana' were a hit at work. Today a gibbed 'Royal Velvet', 'Emma Gaeta Variegated' and an 'Elegans Supreme' were harvested along with clusters of 'Magnoliaeflora'.

What will tomorrow bring? I dream of a perfect 'Nuccio's Gem', an incredibly large and beautiful 'Elizabeth Weaver' or a 'Grand Slam' winner that stays on the calyx and three perfectly matched 'Nuccio's Carousel' all ripe for the next show. Do I ask too much?

As I write I know I have 90 camellia varieties—32 in pots and 68 in the ground for a total collection of 100. My wife thinks 100 camellias is the limit which is certainly rational. However, psychologists like myself deal with the irrational. I tell students and patients that personal growth may require stretching the limits. What can I rationalize or just sneak past her into a niche in the garden? Who knows!

IMPRINTING ON CAMELLIAS

Bradford D. King

As a child growing up in New England, I learned about gardening from my parents and grandparents. As many of you may recall, vegetable gardens or “Victory Gardens” were a major source of fresh produce for many families during and after World War II. My grandparents owned a gentleman’s farm—that is, Pop worked as a mechanical engineer but raised chickens, an occasional horse or cow and grew an extensive vegetable garden every summer. The whole family participated in planting, weeding, watering and harvesting.

During the long cold winter evenings my grandparents and my father broke out the Burpee Seed Catalog and discussed what seeds to purchase. As I learned to read, Dad discussed seeds and showed me pictures of the plants. By the age of 10 I was given my own small section to care for in the garden. With a great deal of excitement I chose to grow peanuts—not a typical Massachusetts crop but plants very appealing to a ten-year old. I learned I had to choose a variety of peanuts with a short growing season and that peanuts weren’t a fruit but part of the root system much like the potatoes we had been growing for years. I learned to be patient and let Mother Nature have her way. I could help Her by weeding and watering, but time and sunlight would do the rest. I was excited to dig the 25 plants and actually find peanuts, but I was disappointed to learn that I had to wait for them to be dried in the sun and then lightly roasted before eating. These early gardening lessons were part of the family closeness and togetherness. This established a fertile ground within me to be imprinted by the first sighting of a CAMELLIA.

This imprinting occurred when I

went to the Boston Flower show in the Horticultural Hall one spring when I was 11. As my family walked through the door of Horticultural Hall, I spotted a small tree dressed with glossy dark green leaves and covered with lovely pink blossoms. I was struck by its beauty at this first sighting and I quickly asked my mother, ‘What is that beautiful tree?’ Dad read the tag—“*Camellia japonica* ‘Pink Perfection’.” I understood immediately that “pink perfection” was what my eyes saw and my heart felt. What does “*camellia japonica*” mean? I was told this was a family name with ‘Pink Perfection’ a specific type. This introduction to classification satisfied me at the time. I asked if I could grow one for I had, after all, successfully grown a southern crop like peanuts the previous summer. I was informed that camellias never grew in New England. “Well,” I responded “How did this get here?” I was told that wealthy people grew them in greenhouses. I knew we weren’t rich enough for that kind of gardening. My parents kindly repeated that I would never be able to grow camellias.

Thirty-five years later Lynn and I moved to California. We began house hunting and, while she carefully checked out the kitchens and dining rooms in each house, I poked around every yard and concentrated on landscaping. I became obsessed with certain small trees and shrubs with lovely green foliage and beautiful flowers that bloomed in winter. This obsession was a puzzle until I remembered back to the Boston Flower Show those many years ago. My head cleared and a light illuminated my mind. “Aha,” I thought as I defiantly spoke out loud, “I can, too, grow camellias!”

CAMELLIAS AS A LIVING COMMEMORATIVE

Lynn and Brad King

The death of a loved one is a tragic personal loss that cannot be resolved by the direct actions of others. However, as friends we may need and want to extend our sympathies to those in grief by something more than words. One tradition is to send flowers to the family on such an occasion. While we value the tradition and the thoughts behind it, we lament the transient nature of cut flowers.

Five years ago our close friends tragically lost their 25 year-old daughter and her fiancé in an automobile accident caused by a drunk driver. We attended the funeral and supported them emotionally. However, we continued to feel their pain and found we had a need to try in some small way to commemorate the beauty of lives ended. Lynn suggested we find a camellia that held their daughter's name to give them as a living tribute. Using Nuccio's catalog, we found a match.

More recently our next door neighbor died soon after major surgery. Our feelings of loss and inadequacy as to how to comfort his wife lead us to decide to again commemorate his rich life as a husband, father and dedicated physician. An avid golfer, he followed the Bob Hope Classic in Palm Springs where they also owned a home. When lack of time didn't permit him to play, he was often seen practicing his putting or chip shots on his front lawn. It seemed appropriate to choose the

camellia 'Bob Hope', a handsome red japonica.

Later that year we encouraged our friends from Northern California to visit and join us in fulfilling their wish to attend a New Year's tradition—the Tournament of Roses Parade. As expected, we had a wonderful time together. They loved all the festivities surrounding the parade and even volunteered time decorating the nearby Sierra Madre float. Imagine their surprise when they met the float driver and discovered that he was actually from their own hometown, Grass Valley.

Sadly, before the year was over, we learned that our dear friend had died suddenly while vacationing out of the country. In reliving memories of our friendship, his wife shared with us how glad she was that he had managed within this year to do several things he had always wanted to do. We decided it would be appropriate to honor his memory with the camellia 'Rose Parade', a saluenensis hybrid.

The loss of family and friends is, unfortunately, a fact of life. We have shared with you one way we have found to help us cope with and our loss and extend our sympathies to those surviving. By commemorating the loss in giving a living camellia as a symbolic tribute to life, our friends share with us not only our love for them but our love of camellias as well.

MEMORIALS

In memory of John Movich
Sergio and Elsie Bracci
Lee and Arlene Chow
Dick and Jackie Stiern

In memory of Eleanor Berry
Les and Edna Baskerville

In memory of Pete Grosso
Tony and Natalie Miranda

In memory of Bob Van Zandt
Tom and Elsie Hughes

AESTHETIC LANDSCAPING WITH CAMELLIAS

by Bradford D. King

In 1985, when my wife and I moved to California from Boston, we were greatly impressed by the landscaping with camellias and azaleas with the house we purchased in Arcadia. The previous owner used the late Tom Matsuoka as his landscape architect. Tom's design utilized a number of landscape principles that are still successful today. I would like to share with you some of these principles that may be helpful to you in your next landscaping project.

The first principle is the three-dimension, or tiered, look. It gives a dramatic effect and also provides shade and privacy. Tom planted a number of moderately sized (20 foot) ornamental figs (*figus microcarpa*), the so-called Indian Laurel Fig. These figs provided the needed shade for the camellias that were planted as the middle tier. The ground level was planted with mounds of zoysia grass, and large rocks were used as accents. This three-tiered effect provided a dynamic field of vision with lots of texture and color.

We decided we wanted more color in spring and summer, so we removed the grass in favor of daylilies—one of my favorites. In California we can have evergreen daylily varieties that rebloom. It is important, in my opinion, to make the garden your own and to put some of your own style and preferences into it. Whenever I do this, I hear my mother's voice saying, "You know you have arrived when you can afford to take out a plant and replace it with a new one."

We have continued to be very pleased with the seven middle tier Japonicas ('Pope Pius IX'), as they provide a mass of wonderful red formal double flowers. Today we have many other red Japonicas with lovely foliage that could be used as group plantings. My current preferences tend to 'Royal Velvet', 'Grand Marshal',

'Grand Prix', 'Bob Hope', or even 'Candy Apple' and 'Rudolph', to name a few varieties that are readily available for landscaping.

The use of seven camellias of one variety provides a striking display. This also illustrates a second landscaping principle; the use of odd numbers of plants is preferable in most situations to an even number. Related to this is the use of one color to maximize visual impact. However, in order to increase variety and to be interesting to the eye, the seven red Japonicas were flanked by single pink specimen for effect. Hybrid camellias 'Flirtation' and 'Donation' were used. These early hybrids provide masses of flowers that are pleasing to look at; in addition, they take some sun too. A traditional Japonica variety that takes sun better than others is 'Debutante'. This was also used effectively in our landscaping, however, we have a wide range of other lovely pinks to choose from. As we have improved our yard, we recently chose 'Shibori Egao' and 'Star Above Star' for sunny locations. If your garden has more shade, accenting it with Japonicas like 'Nuccio's Jewel', 'Nuccio's Carousel', or 'Nuccio's Pearl' would be excellent choices that also frequently make it to the head table at camellia shows. They are winners also in any yard. 'Magnoliaeflora', with its abundant blush pink flowers, creates a great display. If beautiful bloom with early color is your preference, this is a good choice. This variety responds well to gibbing.

Several principles are embedded in the above text. We need to select plants whose requirements match our environment, e.g., spacing and the amount of sun. A more aesthetic principle is that one color/one variety in a mass planting creates a big impact. In contrast, the use of one specimen for accent is also striking, especially when it is a camellia in full bloom.

As Lynn and I fell more in love

with camellias, we decided to take out an established non-flowering hedge. Since the hedge is in full sun, we began researching Sasanquas. As so many before us, we chose 'Yuletide'. This variety is neat and attractive and blooms profusely November through January and even later in Southern California. Its popularity is well deserved. 'Yuletide' is readily available at most nurseries. For a softer, rounder look, 'Shishi Gashira' would make a good choice. 'Dwarf Shishi' can be used if a low border is preferred. The Huntington Library has used them effectively on the ramp to the Japanese garden in a mass display and in the Japanese garden itself.

Let me recap and note that we followed the principles of selecting an odd number (five, in our case) and using one variety for uniformity and a colorful display. This leads to our next principle of landscaping: curved lines are more pleasing to the eye than straight lines. In our project we achieved this because the original architect had the foresight to put in the front brick walk on a gentle curve. This is more pleasing than the traditional straight shot to the door. We can, however, create curves in ways other than ripping up brick and mortar. An alternative is to landscape using curved beds. The use of curved garden paths that use a variety of materials, such as pea stone, grass, or the newer patio materials, is also very effective. I have also been impressed with other homes in Arcadia where rocks and rounded hills have been used to provide more interesting front yards than the traditional grass lawns.

While I have touted mass planting of one color as a principle, the use of color combinations for contrast is also very much an aesthetic principle of landscaping. This gives each of us the opportunity to choose our favorite five, seven, or nine. As my interest in camellias became a passion, I talked Lynn into letting me relandscape the front of the house. The area faces southwest, yet is shaded by two

mature birch trees. I decided on a red and white theme and chose my then favorite varieties. This included 'Glen 40' and 'Adolphe Audusson' alternating with their variegated forms. I also added 'Wildfire' and 'Grand Prix' and used white azaleas ('Nuccio's Masterpiece') under low windows to complete my project. The fun of such landscaping is that we are bound only by the limits of our imagination.

My neighbors are originally from Pasadena and had wonderful mature camellias in their previous yard. They easily became infected by my enthusiasm and decided to introduce camellias in their Arcadia yard. I had to talk them into creating a curved bed for their camellia preferences. We took them to Nuccio's (where else?). Jim—patient, funny, and informative—helped her choose. She and her husband always loved 'Pink Perfection', so that was her beginning. She loved my 'Grand Marshal' and 'Glen 40 Variegated', so they were selected. 'Nuccio's Gem', 'Nuccio's Jewel', 'Silver Waves', and 'Carter's Sunburst' rounded out her list. These were their favorite picks. The best news is that each of us can have our own list of favorites in our garden.

Fortuitously, this landscaping project also provided a wonderfully softer look to their yard as their garden is planted in front of a neighbor's anchor chain link fence with wooden slots running through it.

Camellias can also be used as a beautiful and effective background for other flower gardens. As I drive to work, I pass a house best described as a California country cottage. The owner recently planted a lovely mixed perennial and annual "country" garden which extends from the house to the sidewalk. They used five Japonicas of mixed varieties as a background. The camellias are shaded by trees. This is truly a lovely garden thematically in tune with the country-style house—very effective and very pleasing to look at.

All plants, but especially camellias,

are dynamic, not static. When our neighbor visited Nuccio's, she was having trouble making her decisions. The way we heard the story from Joe is that Julius Nuccio was helping a customer who just could not make up his mind. He continued to obsess about this plant or that plant in a quandary over which was the "right" one. Julius nicely said, "A camellia is not a chair." Yes! A camellia is not a static object. It is a vital, alive, growing plant that changes as it grows. A very significant artistic point was made.

In summary, our aesthetics landscaping principles are:

1. The three dimensional, tiered effect provides depth of vision.
2. Odd numbers of plants are more artistically effective than even numbers.

3. Mass plantings of one species or one color provide a dramatic, colorful display.

4. A single plant as accent can be very eye-catching.

5. Curved lines are more pleasing visually than straight lines.

6. Color combinations can be artistically creative and beautiful.

7. Camellias as a background can be effective in softening fences, houses, or other objects.

8. Themes are a delightful style of landscaping that can also be used to integrate buildings and gardens into a whole.

9. Landscaping with camellias is dynamic; they are alive and ever-changing, which is why they are so wonderful.
