

*Southern California
Camellia Society
The Camellia Review*

BRADFORD KING ARTICLES

2021 – 2025



C. reticulata 'Jim Smelley'

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Return to TOC

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

FALL: A TIME TO HARVEST

BY BRADFORD KING

Fall is especially welcomed this year after a hot summer with 11 straight days with temperatures over 100°. These very high temperatures stress, and in some cases, destroy plants.

Fall is also the time to harvest camellia fruit. Pods open late summer and fall revealing their seeds. I recommend placing jewelry bags on pods to collect the seeds you wish to germinate. If you don't harvest seeds, remove pods to reduce pressure on your camellias. However, if you miss some or just don't want to remove pods, it isn't a problem. For more on ca-



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mellia care, see this issue's article "What to do in the Garden."

Fall is a wonderful time to visit Descanso Gardens, especially the Japanese Garden, whose creative layout features fall blooming *C. sasanqua*. "Descanso Gardens: A Peaceful Place" in this issue discusses the gardens, past and present.

Camellia names are fascinating. Hundreds of camellias are named for women. "Lovely Camellia Misses" in this issue describes some favorites. In addition, "Camellia Namesakes" pairs images of a camellia flower with the inspiration for its name.

The SCCS website has videos highlighting fall blooming camellias as well as why and how to gib camellias.

Fall welcomes the camellia flowering season and the resumption of in person Southern California Camellia Society meetings. The November Society meeting was a field trip to Nuccio's Nurseries, where Jim Nuccio showed and discussed the beautiful fall blooming sun camellias.

Looking forward to seeing camellias in bloom...



'HUGH EVANS' AT DESCANSO GARDENS



**SPRINGTIME IN DESCANSO TULIPS
AND A RED BUD TREE**

Return to TOC

CAMELLIA NAMESAKES

BY BRADFORD KING

Some camellias share characteristics with other objects, such as color and form, which gives them their name. In some cases, they have a symbolic connection.

‘White Bouquet’ illustrates color as a camellia named for the floral display “Bouquet.” I won ‘White Bouquet’ at a camellia society raffle. This is one way to acquire camellias that you may not have on your bucket list. A bouquet of pure white flowers can make an impressive sight. White is a positive color associated with peace and security. It is the traditional color worn by brides which was the color of the flowers my granddaughter held at her wedding.

There are a few camellias named after types of candies. Examples include: ‘Candy Cane’, a medium formal double white flower striped red; ‘Candy Apple’, a medium to large semidouble to loose peony very dark red; ‘Lemon Drop’, a miniature to small white flower with a lemon toned yellow center, and ‘Buttermint’, a miniature creamy white to pale yellow. ‘Buttermint’ has a cluster blooming formal double to rose form double flower with profuse



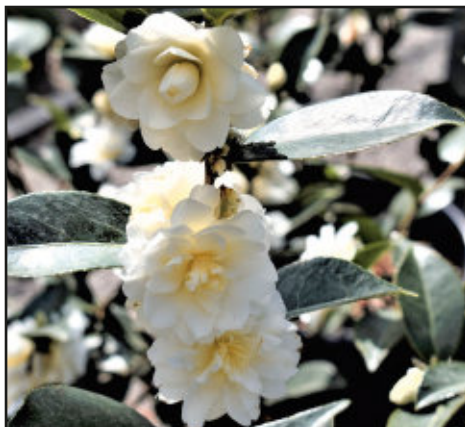
A WHITE WEDDING BOUQUET



‘WHITE BOUQUET’



BUTTERMINT CANDIES



'BUTTERMINT'

flowers that look like a collection of yellowy butter mints. The color, shape, and multiple blooms make us think about the sweet taste of a Buttermint candy.

'Candy Mint' and 'Peppermint Candy' have bright colorful flowers named for sweet mint flavored candies. 'Candy Mint' has a miniature to small anemone pink flower with many darker pink and red stripes on its petaloids and petals.

'Peppermint Candy' has a medium semidouble flower with bright clean red stripes and flecks on the white petals just like a peppermint candy. Most peppermint candies are white with red stripes, but the classic chocolate peppermint makes a delicious ending to a meal. Peppermint has a soothing taste that can help with digestion.

The New Year's Rose Parade usually includes 40 flower covered floats, 20 marching bands, and 17 equestrian groups with a total of 450 horses.



CANDY CANES



'CANDY CANE'



'CANDY MINT'



MINTS

This is an annual event held in Pasadena, California, that everyone should see once in person. There is a Grand Marshal selected to lead the parade. According to Wikipedia, the Disney family is the only family to have more than one member serve as Grand Marshal—Walt Disney in 1966 then his nephew Roy E. Disney in 2000. Louis Zamperini was selected as the Grand Marshal for the 2015 Tournament of Roses Parade. His life was documented in the book and movie entitled “*Unbroken*” about his imprisonment as a Japanese prisoner of war during World War II. He would die of pneumonia six months before the parade was set to begin. Rather than select a new Grand Marshal, the Tournament announced that it was “committed to honoring him as the Grand Marshal of the 2015 Rose Parade.” A riderless white horse with the stirrups backwards, a tradition to symbolize a fallen soldier, led the parade that year.



'PEPPERMINT CANDY'



PEPPERMINT CANDY



'GRAND MARSHAL'

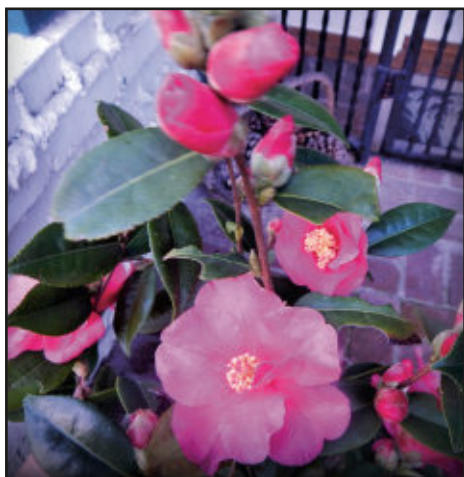


**WHITE RIDERLESS HORSE LEADING
THE 2015 ROSE PARADE**

The medium to large full rich deep red peony flower of 'Grand Marshal' is a top variety. The variegated form is also very desirable, especially when it has uniformed moire markings.

In 1955, Dr. Clifford Parks registered *C. reticulata* 'Crimson Candles'. It has small single rose red flower and numerous candle shaped light red buds. It is also cold hardy and booms late season on a vigorous upright plant. Since it produces many identical flowers, it does well in trays of like blooms even though it is a small single flower.

Originally crimson meant the color of the kermes dye produced from an insect—*Kermes vermilio*. Today it is typically used for a slightly purplish red color between red and rose.



'CRIMSON CANDLES'



CANDLES



‘TWILIGHT’



GOLF COURSE AT TWILIGHT

Twilight is that time between night and sunrise, or between sunset and night, produced by a diffusion of sunlight which, depending on dust and moisture, has subtle color tones like the early morning image taken before any golfers take to the course. The camellia ‘Twilight’ has a light blush pink hue on the petals of this medium to large formal double flower.

Springtime is a joyful time of new growth brought on by increased daylight, showers, and mist. I see Mount Wilson every morning when I walk the dog. It is a peak in the San Gabriel Mountains within the Angeles National Forest in Los Angeles County, California. The summit is easily identified by the substantial number of antennae as part of the Mt. Wilson Observatory even when covered in clouds and mist on a spring morning. ‘Spring Mist’



‘SPRING MIST’



MT. WILSON COVERED WITH MIST



‘SPRING DAZE’

has a small sweet scented semidouble blush pink to white flower. It grows vigorously upright in an open manner blooming late winter and spring. Its fragrance is sweet and light with dozens of flowers which makes it a wonderful landscape camellia.

I love the flower and the name ‘Spring Daze’ for this small colorful non-reticulata hybrid. The bloom is at times a formal double but more frequently an open rose form double flower.

Spring days bring warmth and life to the garden as well as increasing the human spirit. A photo captures just one moment in time. Tick Tock..., another moment of time, and there are the iconic spring tulips framed by two red bud trees in bloom at Descanso Gardens in Southern California. Tick Tock.





LOVELY CAMELLIA MISSES

BY BRADFORD KING

There are 40 *C. japonica* beginning with “Miss” of which a dozen refer to cities or beauty pageants. In addition, there are seven “Miss” *C. reticulata*, five “Miss” nonreticulata hybrids, and two “Miss” *C. sasanqua*.

Traditionally, a beauty contest focused on the physical attributes of female contestants. They have evolved to include talent, intelligence, and personality. Organizers set the standards, including age range, marital status, and clothing. Adult and teen pageants focus on makeup, hair, gowns, swimsuit modeling, and personal interviews. Camellia shows are also beauty contests judging flowers based on their size, form, color, and condition. In fact,

the best exhibitors carefully groom their entries and artfully arrange leaves as meticulously as pageant contestants do their hair and makeup.

Recently at camellia shows in the southeast, the biggest winning Miss is ‘Miss Lillian.’ She was introduced by Gordy in 2001 and awarded the Kathryn and Les Marbury Award in 2007. The small to medium formal double is creamy white with pink on the petal edges.

‘Miss Charleston Variegated’ is one of the biggest show winners in America, especially when it keeps a formal double form with a bud center. When it is a loose peony flower, it is still beautiful but not a show winner.

‘Miss Charleston Variegated’ was named to commemorate the city, which was founded in 1670 as Charles Town honoring King Charles II of England. Today, it is known for its history, well-preserved architecture, restaurants, and friendly people, all of which have made it a popular tourist destination.

There are camellias that have been introduced to honor beauty pageants and the women who compete in them. This is illustrated by ‘Miss Tulare,’ a wonderful *C. reticulata* hybrid that takes its name from the Tulare County California pageant which is sponsored by Visalia Charter Oak Lion’s Club. Every year they crown a lovely young woman “Miss Tulare.” This cultivar has a beautiful large to very large bright rose red flower that can be fully peony, rose form double, or formal double. M. W. Abramson introduced this cul-

I agree with

Claude Monet

when he said,

“I must have

flowers, always

and always.”

—Bradford King



‘MISS CHARLESTON VARIEGATED’



‘MISS TULARE’



'Miss Ed'



'MISS SAVANNAH' Photo by Gene Phillips **'MISS LYLA'** Photo by Gene Philips

tivar in 1975. It is a seedling of *C. reticulata* 'Crimson Robe' ('Dataohong') that first bloomed in 1973. There are only a few formal double reticulata flowers or for that matter rose form doubles which is one reason this camellia is highly valued. It certainly is eye-catching when the bright red flower is in top form. It is especially beautiful when it holds its bud center.

The two *C. sasanqua* "Misses" are 'Miss Ed', which has a miniature to small light pink flower with lavender and deep pink overtones, and 'Miss Penderlea', which has a medium semidouble white flower with coral pink edges and ruffled petals.

'Miss Savannah' has a large blush semidouble flower with rounded petals that are wavy and upright in the center where they become fluted. Savannah is a grand historic town alongside the Savannah River which revolves around formal antebellum architecture and low country swamps and mammoth live oak trees tangled with Spanish moss. Judge Arthur Solomon, a Chatham County commissioner from 1914 to 1960, was an enthusiastic camellia collector. Judge Arthur Solomon is honored at Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens at the Historic Bamboo Farm, where visitors can enjoy over 900 camellia cultivars on the Judge Arthur Solomon Camellia Trail, built by members of the Camellia Society in 2017. Judge Solomon was also a noted 20th century camellia breeder. One of his most beautiful was 'Miss Lyla' which was registered in 1961. 'Miss Lyla' has a large semidouble to rose form double white flower with pink markings. The petals are fluted and tend to swirl with some central crepe petals. It is valued for its colorful markings and large size which are not common with nonreticulata hybrids.



‘CHOJI GURUMA’

WHAT TO DO IN THE CAMELLIA GARDEN

BY BRADFORD KING

AUTUMN

Autumn, also known as fall, marks the transition from summer to winter when daylight shortens, and the temperature cools. One of its main features is colorful fall foliage. For camellia people, autumn is the beginning of the camellia season. The sun loving *C. sasanqua* spectrum cultivars begin to bloom continuing into winter. This includes the inter species crosses historically listed as *C. hiemalis* and *C. vernalis*.

The key camellia care this season is to ensure the camellias remain moist, never allowing them to dry out. It is also important to remove debris in your garden so insects, their eggs, and larva have less opportunity to survive the cold winter months.

The harvesting of camellia pods that you have observed swelling are ripening in the fall. Using an onion bag, old nylons, or a jewelry bag around the seed pod is the best way to ensure seeds are not lost. The seeds may be placed directly in a pot or a germinating container. If the parents are known, label and keep those seeds together. For example, ‘Tama no Ura’ X ‘Royal Velvet’ indicates the seed parent is the former and the latter is the pollen parent. If



‘TAMA PEACOCK’ WITH A BEE

you only know the seed parent, label them too, e.g., ‘Frank Houser’ X ?. It is interesting and helpful to know the parents. However, some of the most beautiful camellia cultivars’ parents are unknown.

The bees will pollinate camellias. Seed pods have one to nine seeds that can be germinated. Chance crosses have been used by the Chinese and Japanese for hundreds of year. Likewise, this is how most of the 200 cultivars originated at Nuccio’s Nurseries came to be.



A COMPARISON OF NATURAL AND GIBBED ‘BUTTONS’ N BOWS’



CAMELLIA HOLIDAY COLLECTION

WINTER

Winter is the season the planet Earth is farthest from the sun bringing colder weather and shorter days. This is also the holiday season when evergreen trees and poinsettia plants are used to decorate the home. However, few plants outdoors are in bloom except camellias. Camellia lovers celebrate the flowering *C. japonica*, *C. reticulata*, and nonreticulata hybrids. Camellias are unique in that they bloom in the winter when they are dormant. This is the season most looked forward to by camellia growers.

Since there are literally thousands of camellia cultivars with beautiful flowers, there is much to enjoy. For many camellia show people, December is the month to gib camellias. This produces larger and earlier blooms.

Natural and gibbed blooms provide flowers for decorating the home in the holiday season.

JANUARY

This is the month that many *C. japonica* will begin blooming. Therefore, it is possible to begin hybridizing. A controlled cross starts with identifying a flower bud getting ready to bloom. The petals and stamens are removed, leaving the female reproductive organ intact. The stigma is located in the center of the flower and, in most cases, is slightly taller than the stamens. When a flower bud is emasculated, it looks like the photo on the following



BUD WITH POLLEN



A GRAFT

page. It is ready for pollen from the camellia chosen to be the “Pollen Parent” to be placed.

FEBRUARY

This is typically peak blooming season for *C. japonica* and nonreticulata hybrids. Some early *C. reticulata* cultivars may also begin to exhibit their flowers. It is a beautiful time to take walks in the garden. It is also a good time to collect and store pollen if you do controlled crosses. If not, why not try it this year.

One of the most important activities is to graft camellias this month. What do you need? First, healthy root stock; second, scions from the plant you wish to replicate. I graft only camellias I can’t get from camellia nurseries, especially those I am evaluating from my breeding program.

SPRING

Spring is the season where the axis of the earth increasingly tilts to the sun, so the amount of daylight increases. Temperatures are warming significantly causing new plant growth to “spring forth” giving the season its name. While many flowering plants will begin blooming this time of year, generally, camellia flowering has ceased. The camellia is breaking dormancy, and leaves are feathering. New camellia foliage is typically green with some cultivars having bronze or maroon leaves that eventually turn dark green.



'TAMA PEACOCK' NEW FOLIAGE WITH LADY BUGS

While camellias require little pruning besides removing dead stems and branches, spring is a good time to prune. Besides removing dead growth, remove crossed branches and shape the plant to your liking.

This season is the time to fertilize camellias. A commercial granular fertilizer for acid loving plants is a sound choice. Apply it sparingly in order not to burn the new leaves. One of the tried-and-true fertilizers is cottonseed meal because it won't burn foliage. Others will use liquid fertilizers for acid loving plants.

SUMMER

This is the warmest of the four seasons when the days are longest and nights are shortest with day length decreasing as the season progresses. The date of the beginning of summer varies according to climate, culture, and tradition, but when it is summer in the United States and Europe, it is winter in Australia and New Zealand. Summer in the U.S. includes the months of June, July, and August when only *C. azalea*, or its hybrid seedlings, bloom. If you wish to breed using *C. azalea*, this is the time to collect pollen and store it in the freezer.



STORING POLLEN

Descanso GARDENS: *A Peaceful Place*

BY BRADFORD KING

In the fall, a stroll in the Japanese Garden at Descanso Gardens features beautiful *C. sasanqua* cultivars growing under the shade of Coast Live Oaks. Other plants include black pine, flowering cherry, and Japanese maples. It was designed by Eijiro Nunokawa and opened in 1966. A curving path that leads to the Japanese Tea House is creatively landscaped with the beautiful shell pink flowers of *C. sasanqua* 'Jean May'.

Near the tea house are several specimens of the *C. sasanqua* 'Hugh Evans' growing among Japanese lanterns. 'Hugh Evans' is noted for its abundant single pink flowers with twisted petals.

The small pond has koi fish that have been bred in Japan to be viewed from above rather than a side view like when looking at fish in an aquarium. One of the few anemone form *C. sasanqua*, 'Choji Guruma', grows on the front edge of the koi pond. The name means "wheel of anemone." The light pink flower has darker pink on the petal and petaloid edges.

Francis Uyematsu (1881-1978) came from his native Japan as a 23-year-old in 1904. He and a friend began importing



THE JAPANESE
GARDEN PATH
WITH 'JEAN MAY'
IN BLOOM





‘HUGH EVANS’



‘CHOJI GURUMA’



‘BERENICE BODDY’

plants in 1908 from Japan to Figueroa Nursery in Los Angeles. In 1912, Francis Uyematsu moved to a five-acre lot in Montebello, California, and established a wholesale business named “Star Nursery.” He was very enterprising to the point of operating four nurseries, a wholesale flower market, and experimenting with hybridizing willows, wisterias, peaches, and breeding tropical fish. Over the years, Star Nursery imported hundreds of thousands of camellias.

After Pearl Harbor and the United States entering World War II, Mr. Uyematsu was faced with internment along with other Japanese Americans, which meant the loss of his property and business. On February 22, 1942, he was visited by Manchester Boddy, newspaper publisher of Los Angeles Daily News, and Charles S. Jones, President of the Richfield Oil Company, both avid camellia collectors who wished to buy camellias for their estates in the Los Angeles area of California. Mr. Boddy got most of the named camellias. Mr. Jones got several of the unnamed seedlings, some of them in bloom. Some were named and distributed by Descanso with Jones’s numbers. For example, number S101 (Star Nursery #101 seedling) became ‘Berenice Boddy’. This well-known *C. japonica* was introduced

by Descanso and Jones in 1946 and was named for Manchester Boddy's wife. The beautiful semidouble flower is pale pink with deeper pink on the under petals and edges.

Mr. Uyematsu, through Star Nursery, was a major importer, propagator, and distributor of camellias in America. In American camellia history, we have individuals, commercial nurseries, and public gardens that have made significant contributions to the camellia world. One of the least known and yet most important was Mr. Uyematsu. Descanso Gardens seeks to honor his legacy.

Many of the camellias he imported are in the Descanso Gardens collection. This is illustrated here by 'Hana-Fuki' ("Wealthy and Noble Flower") which dates to 1882 in Japan. He imported this beautiful pink semidouble flower in 1930.

While most of his imports are rarely seen at camellia shows, one exception is the 'Fukurin-ikkyu' which dates to 1859 in Japan. The lovely small pink flower with darker pink stripes is appreciated by many camellia lovers. Recently a tray of three beautiful evenly matched flowers won in its class by George and Karen Harrison.

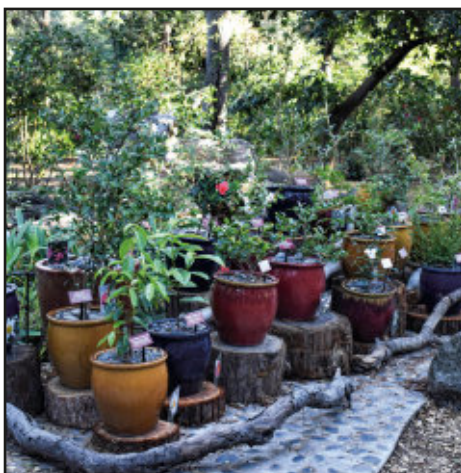
Diana Nightingale, Curator of Camellias, arranged a display table of the Star Nursery camellias in



'HANA-FUKI'



'FUKURIN-IKKYU'



CAMELLIA SPECIES DISPLAY

bloom in mid-February for the 2022 Pacific Camellia show at Descanso Gardens.

The last two years Descanso has been seeking to add to their camellia collection by adding camellia species. For example, in 2021 two dozen species were displayed as a means of educating the public to the diversity of camellias.

In 2022, 18 camellia species were donated to Descanso by Nuccio's Nurseries. One group was displayed in colorful pots under the mature tea plant *C. sinensis* in the Japanese Garden. The globe in the photo foreground shows the route of *C. reticulata* from Yunnan China to Descanso in 1948.

In this display, the ornamental species are highlighted: Higo, *C. japonica*, *C. reticulata*, and nonreticulata camellias.

The remaining two dozen were arranged in front of the Minka House, also in the Japanese Garden. The species are clearly labeled to educate and assist visitors to learn about the diversity of camellias.

The February Southern California Society speakers were Autumn Ayres, Plant Records Coordinator, and Diana Nightingale, Curator of the Camellia Collection. They reported that Descanso plans to restore the Uyematsu and Yoshimura



CAMELLIA SPECIES DISPLAY



**GLOBE SHOWING THE YUNNAN
C. RETICULATAS TO DESCANSO**



CAMELLIA SPECIES DISPLAY



AUTUMN AYRES



DIANA NIGHTINGALE

camellias; restore the Yunnan *C. reticulata* which have been in serious decline; continue to add camellia species to highlight the diversity of camellias species, and to grow more of the tea and oil-bearing camellias.

Before we conclude, it should be noted that one of the highlights of Descano Gardens is seeing multiple mature camellias in full bloom. There is no better sight in the middle of winter than to see a 20-foot camellia tree covered in masses of flowers.



CAMELLIAS IN FEBRUARY

Return to TOC

HIGO TREASURES FROM JAPAN:

‘KYO-NISHIKI’

STORY AND PHOTO BY BRADFORD KING

The flower of ‘Kyo-Nishiki’ (Brocade of Japan) is white with red or pink spots and stripes. It may have purple markings at times. The medium flat flower has a mass of central stamens. It appears in *Higo Camellias* by Ghirardi on page 84, but there is typographic error in that it is labeled as ‘Kyo Hishiki’ yet correctly labeled in the bibliography as ‘Kyo-Nishiki’. It is an ancient cultivar that mutated ‘Asahi-no-minato’, ‘Mikuni-no-homare’, and ‘Jitsu-getsu-sei’.



‘KYO-NISHIKI’

[Return to TOC](#)



PARTING SHOT:
LOOK-ALIKE YELLOW CAMELLIAS

BY BRADFORD KING

It has been a dream of hybridizers to breed yellow camellias. Therefore, when look-alike yellow cultivars were bred, they were introduced even though they were not significantly different from each other. Two from Australia and one from New Zealand come to mind.

In 1965, a white flower with creamy to pale yellow petaloids was registered in Australia. Dr. Morey named it 'Gwenneth Morey'. It was a chance seedling of 'Edith Linton' which first bloomed in 1961. The medium anemone flower is similar in appearance but not identical to 'Brushfield's Yellow'. It too has a white flower with creamy yellowish central petaloids. It was bred by Keith Brushfield, Australia.

Les Jury used 'Gwenneth Morey' as the pollen parent to get 'Jury's Yellow'. It has a lovely white anemone flower with creamy yellow petaloids that is widely grown. It blooms early to late on a compact upright plant.



‘JURY’S YELLOW’

As the photos show, they all have medium white flowers with different degrees of pale yellow petaloids that form an attractive anemone flower. However, an outstanding show entry shows an example of a very yellow ‘Jury’s Yellow’. Wow!

Since yellow is a rare camellia cultivar, the hybridizers registered them with their family names. Who can blame them!



‘BRUSHFIELD’S YELLOW’



‘GWENNETH MOREY’



‘PINK-A-BOO’



‘KANJIRO’

Return to TOC

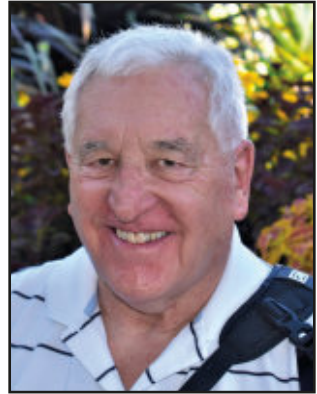
THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

PRUNING: NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

BY BRADFORD KING

Spring is the time to prune camellias, pick up spent flowers, and begin a fertilizing program.

There were “old-timer members” who mentored many of us and who severely pruned their camellias. Elsie Bracci cut limbs and pruned so severely that her husband Sergio couldn’t look and usually left for a few hours. Mel Belcher pruned but thought fall was better than spring. He would typically leave one superior bud to a branch. Both won plenty of awards in the next year’s camellia show season.



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I cannot prune as they did. My recommendation is to prune dead wood, crossed branches, and shape the camellias as needed. When a camellia does not bloom adequately, I prune it more heavily and if in a container, repot it.

I follow two different camellia fertilizing approaches. Marilee Gray always used Miracle-Gro for acid loving plants three to four times a season until the leaves were thick and dark green; then she switched to cotton seed meal every 60 days. I have been using the foliar spray Miracle-Gro once or twice and switching to cotton seed meal.

This year I went back to the 5-1-1 formula used by old timers like the Braccis and Jacks, now in camellia heaven. Five parts cotton seed meal, one part iron, and one part blood meal. This will be used twice—April first (not an April Fools' day trick) and again in mid-May followed by cotton seed meal every 45 days when the summer hot temperatures arrive. Blood meal and Miracle-Gro for acid loving plants have elevated levels of nitrogen (greater than 10%) which stimulates growth but can burn foliage, so be careful, especially with nonreticulata hybrids. I use half the amount on them. Typically, I use a handful around the base of plants in the ground and less with potted camellias based on their size. Less is better than more when fertilizing camellias.



NUCCIO'S GREEN BOTTLES, P. 21, 'HIGH FRAGRANCE'



'CITY OF NEWBERG' Photo by Don Bergamini

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NEW TO ME ... WHAT ABOUT YOU?

BY BRADFORD KING

One of the thrills of attending a camellia show is seeing a camellia you have never seen before. In Southern California, it is frequently seen at the Nuccio's Nurseries table found among the 200 blooms they bring to display. On other occasions, it was entered by a grower from northern California who had to pick flowers and drive 5 or 6 hours the day before to enter the show.

This season Nuccio's Nurseries had a duo of medium formal double blush flowers edged in pink that were new to me. 'Blush Purity' is not listed in the 2020 *Camellia Nomenclature* but is in the Nuccio's Catalogue. It is a 'Purity' sport that blooms mid to late season.

Usually once a season, Carol and Gary Schanz make the trip from Sacramento to visit Nuccio's Nurseries, friends, and enter a camellia show. In 2022, they entered two beautiful winners in the medium Japonica class. 'Theresa Burnham' is a formal double dark red flower introduced by Walter Creighton, Semmens, Alabama, in 2013. This beautiful camellia got Best of



'BLUSH PURITY'



‘THERESA BURNHAM’

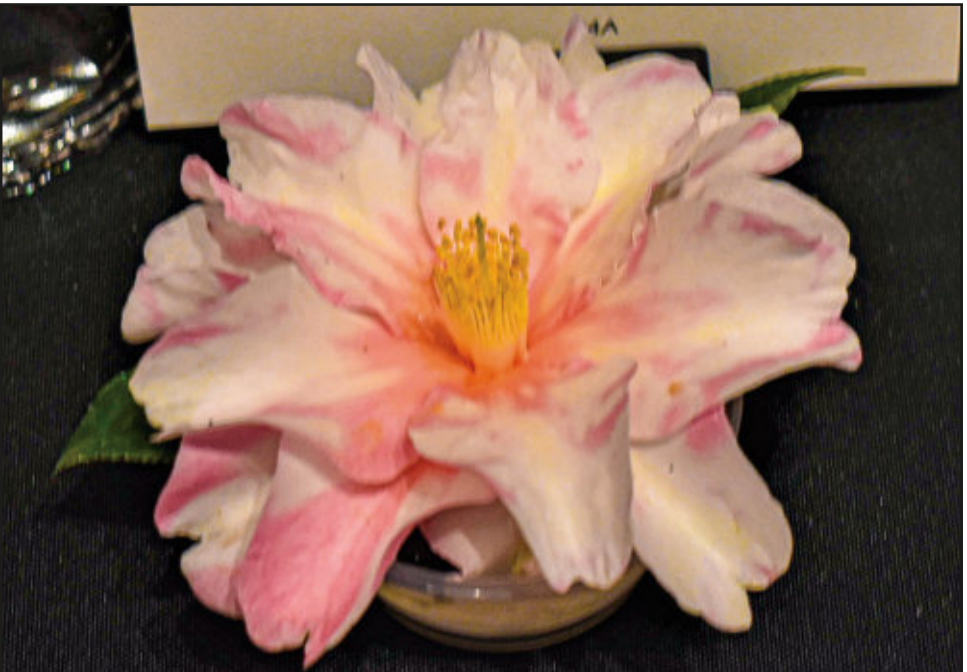


‘YEAMANS HALL’

class at the Pacific Camellia Society show held at Descanso Gardens.

In the same medium japonica class, ‘Yeamans Hall’ won Court of Honor. This formal double is shell pink with darker pink stripes making a beautiful entry.

Current research has identified there are eight viruses in camellias. The key is to have one or more that make a beautiful flower. Gary Schanz variegated ‘Sue Kendall’ for his camellia friends from Modesto, California, as



‘LUCKY STAR VARIEGATED’



‘SUE KENDALL VARIEGATED’

well as ‘Lucky Star’. Since he gave the plant material to Nuccio’s Nurseries to propagate, this means we all can get these cultivars with excellent variegation. Thanks to Gary!

In this same camellia show, Richard and Barbara Council won Best in the nonreticulata class with ‘Lucky Star Variegated’ and Best in the Japonica miniature and small with ‘Sue Kendall Variegated’. They purchased the plants from Nuccio’s.

Don and Mary Bergamini come to one or more camellia shows from Martinez, California. Don is noted for hybridizing, growing, and showing miniature and small camellias.



‘RAYNA SIMONE’

This year he entered ‘Rayna Simone’ which he introduced in 2017. The miniature anemone red flower was named for a granddaughter. This was her first appearance in a Southern California show. A lovely camellia for an active child, Rayna Simone attends Hidden Valley Elementary School and enjoys dance and gymnastics.

Don has entered some



'PARTY POPPERS'



'MARGHERITA COLEONI VAR.'

of Dan Charvet's introductions. Dan spent 50 years as a camellia breeder and owner of Heartwood Nursery in Fort Bragg, California. He focused on developing beautiful landscape camellias that are "self-grooming" (shed by themselves) and require less water to thrive and bloom in the garden. He registered 25 *C. reticulata* hybrids and six nonreticulata hybrids before he retired and closed Heartland Nursery. In Southern California, we rarely see his introductions, but thanks to Don Bergamini, we have seen 'Ms. Mo', 'Shelter Cove', and 'City of Newberg'.

The City of Newberg, a suburb of Portland, Oregon, has a tradition of decorating the downtown with camellias. They asked Dan to name one of his cultivars 'City of Newberg' when the state legislature named Newberg the "Camellia City of Oregon." The 'City of Newberg' has a very large semi-double pink flower that shades lighter on the petal edges. It is a vigorous upright bushy plant.

This year I was surprised when Don entered treated 'Party Poppers' in the miniature nonreticulata class and won. Many camellia show people don't gib flowers, and even those who do, usually don't gib miniature flowers. I ignored 'Party Poppers' because it is hard to see the growth bud, and it has clusters of buds. Therefore, the grower must disbud and gib only one of the buds on a stem. In other words, it was new to me that a miniature cluster blooming camellia can not only be gibbed, but win at a show. I have generally enjoyed 'Party Poppers' as part of a camellia floral display.

Joey Goldfarb entered 'Margherita Coleoni Variegated' in the "Old Tim-



'SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL'



**NICK TCHAN AND HIS WINNING
ENTRY, 'ELAINE'S BETTY'**

er's" class, a flower not often seen today. It was a first for me, and it also won first place. It is interesting to hear what Joey Goldfarb said. "We have many old-timers on our property which is across the street from what was then the famous Ralph Peer estate. Over the years, we made friends with Jimmy Tuliano, the Peer's head gardener. He was a fantastic guy; there was nothing he couldn't do. After Mr. Peer was no longer with us, sometime in the 1980s a section of the estate was to be sold, and hundreds of his camellias would be destroyed. Jim invited us to dig as many as we wanted. We wanted them ALL! At that time a dozen young men were living with my family. We diligently spent hours digging up one plant. We made very large root balls and wheeled them across the street. It transformed our property. It took as much as five years for some of them to get reestablished. Well, that is how we have so many Old-Timers!"

As we conclude this article, let's introduce two young people new to Southern California Camellia shows. Michael Ossen is a 21-year-old with a passion for camellias. He takes care of an older collection for his family and is regularly adding new camellias. This season he won as a novice in the first show of the season with an excellent bloom of 'Something Beautiful'.

Nick Tchan grew up in Southern California. This year he built a collection of 400 camellias at his parents' home before relocating to South Carolina for work. He returned for the Pacific Camellia Show, swept the Intermediate class, and collected over two dozen crystal trophies that were won in several different classes in this show. One of his favorite wins was 'Elaine's Betty'.



THE HUNTINGTON NORTH VISTA STATUES, CAMELLIAS, AND FOUNTAIN



THE HUNTINGTON *North Vista*

BY BRADFORD KING

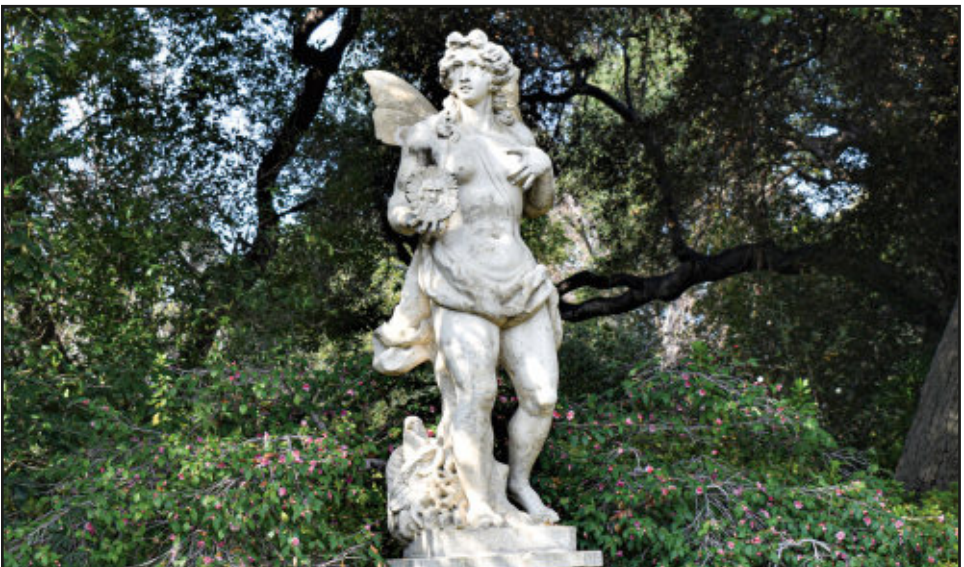
The Huntington Botanical Gardens North Vista features camellias and azaleas planted around 17th and 18th century limestone statues. They are shaded by Live Oaks and Palm trees. It is a beautiful landscape design that highlights both the statues and plants. The statues are allegoric dramatic representations of abstract ideas and events.



ALLEGORY OF SANGUINITY

Literary examples of an allegory are Orwell's *"Animal Farm"* where the animals' interactions represent political figures and events. The Harry Potter stories have been interpreted as an allegorical fight between good and evil with Harry as a Christ figure and "his name who should not be named" as Satan. Another allegorical story is *"The Lord of the Flies,"* a dramatic representation of the effects of war on the breakdown of society.

Eight of The Huntington statues, and the camellias planted with them,



ALLEGORY OF TRUTH



ALPHEUS AND ARETRUSA

are highlighted here. We begin with The Allegory of Sanguinity statue which portrays confidence and optimism. It is paired with the 'Marchioness of Salisbury' which has small dark maroon peony flowers with white markings.

The Allegory of Truth is surrounded by a large planting of *C. rosae flora* which has masses of small pink flowers. The plant grows in a lovely upright arching manner around the statue base. The Allegory of Truth has many



ALLEGORY OF PEACE

meanings in literature, usually symbolizing the relationship between truth and humanity, even human beings fear of truth. Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" is a classic literary example.

An impressive mature 15-foot tall 'Fashionata' towers over the Allegory of the Greek river god Alpheus and Arethusa the water nymph. He pursued her until eventually their waters mingled. Every winter 'Fashionata' produces abundant beautiful large deep pink semidouble flowers with curled and creped petals. It is the most impressive of these statues and camellia plantings.

Agostino Testa (1662-1735) was one of the creators of these allegorical figures in the Huntington North Vista. A good example is this figure representing peace. It is paired with *C. japonica* 'Iris', a medium formal double white flower with occasional pink stripes. This camellia was introduced in 1848 by Baptiste and Son Nursery from Sidney, Australia.

The Allegory of Flattery is enhanced when it is paired with the large light orchid pink peony flower, with strawberry highlights, of 'Owen Henry'. It is a gorgeous flower which makes this work of art more attractive, which is the definition of "to flatter." The ancient Roman God Mars was the son of Jupiter and Juno. He was the most prominent of the Roman Gods of war. He is seen in the North Vista with the red medium semidouble *C. japonica* 'Wildfire' in the background. This statue of Mars was the creation of Ciacomo Casselli (1682-1757).



ALLEGORY OF FLATTERY

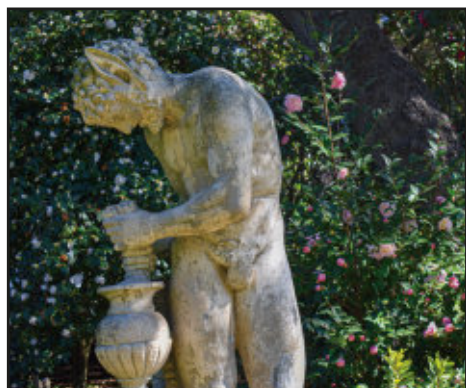


MARS WITH 'WILDFIRE'

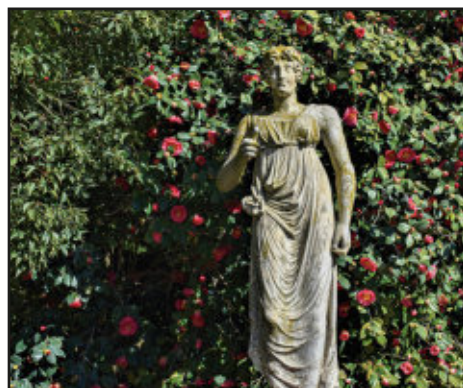
Pan was the Greek god of nature, shepherds, and flocks. Pan, with his goat feet and horned head, scared mortals. Even Nymphs were afraid of him. The nymph Syrinx chose to be transformed into marsh reeds to save herself from Pan's advances. Pan created the first set of panpipes, when seeking her, by cutting the reeds in decreasing size then joining them side by side. This is why he is seen here with panpipes. The lovely scented 'High Fragrance', with its pale white and pink peony flowers, can be seen in the background in full bloom.

The female figure from ancient times to the present is a frequent subject of paintings and sculptures, therefore, it is not surprising that she is also found in the Huntington North Vista. She is a full-figured woman placed in the foreground with the large red 'R.L Wheeler' flowering in the background.

What would you do with 21 ten-foot limestone statues? They would be out of scale in most gardens. The three-tiered landscape design in the North Vista is a wonderful use of azaleas, camellias, palms, and live oaks that creatively enhances these limestone sculptures.



PAN



FEMALE FIGURE



C. nitidissima

NUCCIO'S *Green Bottles*

BY BRADFORD KING

At Southern California camellia shows, Nuccio's Nurseries displays 200 beautiful camellias of which some of the most interesting are in green bottles.

People who visit camellia shows are surprised to learn that there are so many beautiful camellias, and that tea is *C. sinensis*. The Nuccio's usually display camellia species in green bottles. One that catches our eye is *C. nitidissima* with its cup shaped yellow flower. It is one of the parents that hybridizers have used to produce the new yellow cultivars.

YELLOW CAMELLIAS

The green bottles and yellow camellias make a lovely display that shows off the delicate yellow tones of these camellia hybrids.

'Kicho' has a pale yellow small tubular shaped flower that blooms early to midseason on a vigorous upright plant. The name means "precious."

The light-yellow flower of 'Kiho' (Yellow Phoenix) has a small to medium bloom with a tubular form and wavy petals. It blooms early to midseason on a vigorous upright plant.



'KICHO'



'KIHO'



'KI-NO-GOZEN'



'KOGANE-YURI'



'KOGANE-NISHIKI'



'MINATO-NO-AKEBONO'

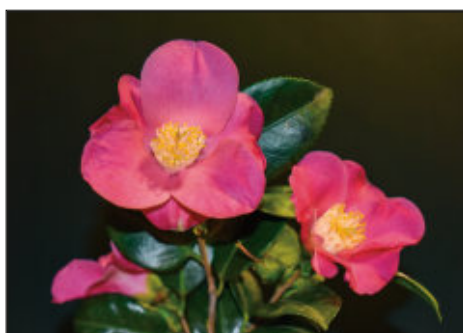
'Ki-No-Gozen' has a lovely light yellow small single cup shaped bloom that means "presence of yellow." It blooms on a vigorous upright plant in midseason.

The small single soft yellow lily shaped flower of 'Kogane-Yuri' means "yellow lily." It has a heavy bud set and produces an abundance of flowers on a slender upright bush.

The small single trumpet shaped 'Kogane-Nishiki' has slender red stripes and a soft yellow background. It is the result of a cross between *C. nitidissima* and 'Betty Foy Sanders' made by Toichi Domoto.

FRAGRANT CAMELLIAS

A frequent question heard at a camellia show is, "Are there fragrant camellias?" Consequently, the fragrant camellias displayed in green bottles are a favorite. Children and their parents love to smell them. The three most popular are 'Minato-no-akebono', 'Koto-no-kaori', and 'High Fragrance'.



'KOTO-NO-KAORI'



‘HIGH FRAGRANCE’

‘Minato-no-akebono’ has a miniature cup shaped lovely deep pink sweetly scented flower that was named for the smell of a harbor. It grows in an upright manner and has an abundance of flowers early to midseason. The flowers bloom up and down slender branches among the small leaves.

The small dark pink flower of ‘Koto-no-kaori’ has a rich scent that rivals larger fragrant camellias. The scent reminded its hybridizer, Mr. Hagiya, of an ancient city in Japan. The plant has a lacy upright growth habit producing many flowers early to midseason.

The most popular fragrant camellia bloom is the medium peony formed pale ivory flower with deeper shades of pink of ‘High Fragrance’. It grows vigorously in an open manner blooming mid to late season. The foliage is light green. The bushy plant needs be mature before it will have buds and beautiful flowers, but it is worth the wait.

NONRETICULATA HYBRIDS

When *C. japonica* was crossed with *C. saluenensis*, these hybrids are known as *Williamsaii hybrids* named after John Charles Williams of Caerhays Castle in Cornwall, England. Williams died in 1939, and the first hybrid was named ‘J.C. Williams’ and introduced in 1940. This lovely single small pink flower was the beginning of the inter specific crossing of camellia species which continues today with great success. A cluster of ‘J.C. Williams’ looks lovely in a green bottle on the Nuccio’s display table.



'J.C. WILLIAMS'

Tadao Yamaguchi successfully bred yellow camellias like 'Kicho', 'Kiho', and 'Ki-no-gozen' highlighted above. This breeding program also resulted in his introducing 'Ki-no-joman'. The single flower is a lovely shade of a very light pink that blooms profusely on a bushy upright plant mid to late season.

Dr. Hagiya was undoubtedly both surprised and pleased when a 'Shi-shi-gashira' crossed with *C. yuhsienensis* seedling produced a small single flower with genetic white blotches. He called it 'Yume' which means "Dream." It is particularly attractive when the petals alternate pink and white. The plant grows in a spreading somewhat open manner producing a profusion of flowers up and down the branches. It blooms mid to late season.

A small very dark cluster of 'Night Rider' looks good in a green bottle. This nonreticulata hybrid got its color from 'Kuro-Tsubaki', the black camellia.



'KI-NO-JOMAN'



'YUME'



‘NIGHT RIDER’

LOVELY LITTLE BLOOMS

The miniature and small single flowers are typically displayed by Nuccio’s in the green bottles. Larger and more complicated blooms, whose heads hang down and easily fall off, are shown in small cups. At home, complicated camellias look good floating in a bowl. A small vase with lovely blooms looks good at home or in a green bottle on the Nuccio’s table. This is illustrated by ‘Otohime’ which has a pink miniature sake cup single flower with white blotches. It is the virus variegated form of *C. japonica* ‘Mikawa-sukiya’. The sweet little flower is like a young princess which is what it means in English.

CLUSTER BLOOMING CAMELLIAS

The cluster blooming camellias are not typically show flowers, however, they



NUCCIO’S DISPLAY



‘OTOHIME’



'BUNNY EARS'

petals that look like rabbit ears. Both the seed parent *C. rosae-flora* and its seedling, 'Bunny Ears,' are attractive in the Nuccio's green bottles.

CAMELLIA SASANQUA

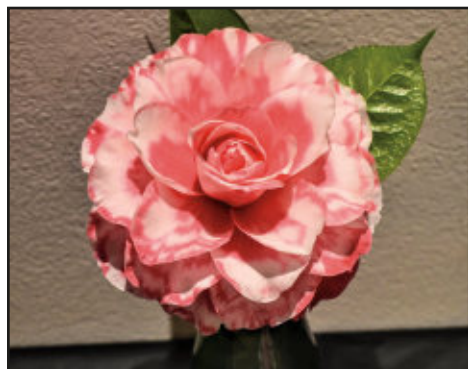
Typically, the sasanquas bloom in the fall and are widely grown in a sunny location as landscape plants. They have abundant flowers which usually shatter when cut, but occasionally some make it to the green bottles on the Nuccio's table. This is illustrated by 'Autumn Dawn'. The

medium loose peony white toned flower shades to pink on the petal edges. The plant grows upright and is slightly open, blooming late season which is why it can make a winter camellia show.

are impressive in the garden with their profuse flowers. They are an excellent choice for floral arranging as illustrated by 'Bunny Ears', a *C. rosae-flora* hybrid introduced by Nuccio's. The miniature to small semidouble flower is a lovely shade of pink. It gets its name for the upright center



'AUTUMN DAWN'



'VALENTINE DAY VARIEGATED'

IN CONCLUSION

There are many beautiful camellias on the Nuccio's display table at each Southern California Camellia show. We close this article with the very beautiful *C. reticulata* 'Valentine Day Variegated' because it is awesome!



C. vietnamensis

SPECIES:

C. VIETNAMENSIS

BY BRADFORD KING

C. vietnamensis has a showy medium to large single white flower with golden stamens. The mildly fragrant flowers bloom late fall and early winter on a vigorous upright somewhat open plant. It originates in China and Vietnam. It is useful in hybridizing for transmitting to its seedlings a large flower with a wonderful cluster of golden stamens and robust growth habit. It is widely cultivated in China for its oil-bearing seeds.

While it is not cold hardy, it is easily cultivated and is not susceptible camellia diseases. Therefore, it is a candidate to investigate to evaluate its resistance to camellia petal blight (*Ciborinia camelliae*).

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HIGO TREASURES FROM JAPAN: ‘SHIN-TSUKASA-NISHIKI’

STORY AND PHOTO BY BRADFORD KING

‘Shin-Tsukasa-Nishiki’ is an ancient cultivar with white petals covered with crimson stripes and dots such that it may look pink. It has 160 to 200 stamens with pale yellow filaments. It grows vigorously and blooms late season. The petals may fold back which is also a characteristic of its five sports.

Shin means “new,” tsukasa is a Japanese girl’s name, and nishiki means “brocade” so the name may mean “Tsukasa’s new brocade” or “New Governor’s brocade” depending on the original Japanese characters.



‘SHIN-TSUKASA-NISHIKI’



'TAMA PEACOCK' NEW GROWTH

PARTING SHOT:
UNUSUAL LEAF MARKINGS

BY BRADFORD KING

There are a few camellias that have beautiful new growth. When flowers are over, we can enjoy the colorful flush of new foliage. The new leaves of *C. japonica* 'Tama Peacock' are a beautiful shade of maroon and attract lady bugs who forage among the leaves eating aphids.

The nonreticulata hybrid 'Night Rider' has dark maroon new foliage as well as red stems and roots. While we can't see the roots except when repotting, we can enjoy the maroon foliage in the spring. 'Ferris Wheel' has a very attractive large to very large flower



**'NIGHT RIDER' FLORAL ARRANGEMENT
WITH MAROON LEAVES**



'FERRIS WHEEL'



'FERRIS WHEEL' LEAF

with pink and red stripes. When in bloom, it can't be overlooked. However, have you noticed some of the new growth has a reddish-brown blotch on its leaves? As the foliage matures, it disappears.

The dark red 'Bella Jinhua' flower, with black veins, is a sport from 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa'. The medium formal double flower is outstanding. The leaves are burgundy for months before turning light green with black streaks and flecks that are less attractive than the early growth.



'BELLA JINHUA' FLOWER WITH SOME OF THE BLACK SPOTTED FOLIAGE



‘GRAND PRIX’



'JULIUS NUCCIO'

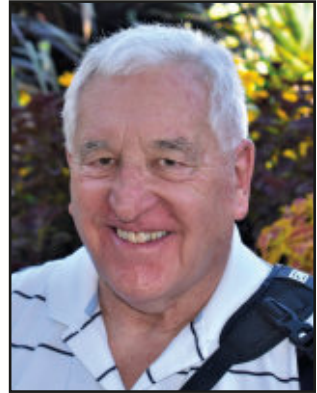
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THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

WINTER IS A CAMELLIA WONDERLAND

BY BRADFORD KING

Winter is peak camellia blooming season with its beautiful flowers. A walk in the garden in the morning is the time to see which camellias have opened up to show their beautiful faces. Look for a few to cut and bring indoors to enjoy during the day. One large bloom floating in a bowl is simple and attractive. A stem of miniature flowers with their foliage makes a pretty arrangement. Groups of three or five flowers make the dinner table centerpiece.



Winter is the time to graft camellias. Do you have a seedling or sport no one has? If so, make a couple of grafts. For example, several of us wanted to

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grow ‘Dragon Fireball’ which is not available at Nuccio’s. We found a friend who shared scions with us to graft. Sharing scions among friends and acquaintances is part of the fun of growing camellias and another good reason to be a member of a camellia society. This issue has an article, “Dragons,” which includes ‘Dragon Fireball’.

Love an old camellia hard to find in a Nursery, why not graft it? If the plant is mature learn to do “air layering” to get a good-sized rooted plant in a year. If a camellia typically buds up but fails to open, see if this issue’s article “Camellia Bullnose Flowers” offers a viable solution. If all effort fails to get this cultivar to open, it’s time to use it as rootstock. This can be done in two ways: an approach graft or cleft graft. These grafting methods are well documented on websites and printed literature. Learning something new is an opportunity to help us age gracefully. When a graft takes, it can bloom in two years, while cuttings take at least five years to bloom. In addition, camellia cuttings are hard to get to root without a misting system.

This camellia season we have shows and in person Society meetings. Please join us! We maintain social distancing and wear face masks as required by the LA County Board of Health.

Stay Safe and Healthy!





BUD WITH POLLEN

Return to TOC

THE CAMELLIA MIND AT WORK AND PLAY

BY BRADFORD KING

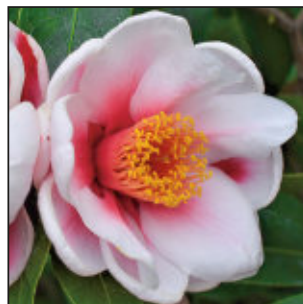
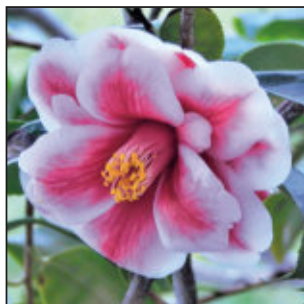
The camellia mind is that part of you that thinks, feels, desires, remembers, and imagines all things camellia. If it interferes with work or relationships, it has become an obsession, which is not good....time to seek help.

The winter season stimulates the camellia mind. While annuals die, perennials become dormant, deciduous trees lose their leaves, and the ever-green camellias produce bright, beautiful, colorful flowers.

JANUARY

This is the month that many *C. japonica* begin blooming. I look forward to 'Tama no Ura' which has a small red flower with a nice wide white edge. Since the border is genetic, it has also been widely used in hybridizing to get flowers with a picotee edge. My favorite is 'Tama Peacock' which has a maroon flower that shades into the white border. It sets seeds regularly. 'Tama Peacock' is the seed parent of 'King's Cup' which has a white cup shaped flower with a maroon center like a splash of wine in a goblet.

Hybridizing camellias is possible whenever camellias are in bloom. Usually this is the month to start. Hybridizing begins with a goal, for example, of a medium to large camellia with a white border. Consequently, one parent must



'TAMA PEACOCK' x 'SAN DIMAS' = 'KING'S CUP'



‘GRAND SLAM’ IN A CRYSTAL BOWL

have a genetic white border like ‘Tama Peacock.’ The other parent should be medium or larger such as ‘San Dimas.’ This was the parentage for ‘Kings Cup.’

The second step is to choose a ripe bud to emasculate which will have pollen placed on the stigma.

Next comes waiting...did the controlled cross take? When a seedpod is produced, it brings joy. Continuing to observe it develop is part of the fun of hybridizing.

Some camellia nurseries and hobbyists have had great success in producing distinctive seedlings by letting the bees do the pollinating. This has been the strategy at Nuccio’s Nurseries for over 75 years and more recently by Pat Johnson. She has the land to plant hundreds of seedlings and to choose the best to introduce, many of which have been propagated by Randolph Maphis. Pat has named many for camellia folk.

FEBRUARY

This may be the shortest and coldest month of the year, but it is camellia heaven with *C. japonica*, *C. reticulata*, and the nonreticulata hybrids bloom-

ing in the garden. Walking in the garden each morning, you can see which new flowers have opened. When there is a show to enter, it means deciding when and what to pick. Many will pick the morning of a show, while others pick the day before, but a few will choose to pick and store flowers in a refrigerator. Is this work or play...it feels like both to me. What say you?

Regardless, if you just enjoy looking at the flowers, it is a pleasure. Even more fun is picking your favorites for a home display. Simply float them in a bowl or arrange a floral display, whichever is most enjoyable. This clearly is fun, not work!

This is the month to graft. Why? To reproduce a plant you have hybridized, can't find in a nursery, or just because you want more of them. I only graft camellias I can't find at Nuccio's. Consequently, it is seedlings I am evaluating for potential introduction, ones I have registered, or camellias not propagated at local nurseries. It is great fun to get a scion from friends in the southeast of varieties not seen often in California. This has included 'Seafoam,' 'Miss Sally,' 'Daddy Mac,' and 'Bobbie Fain Variegated.' When a graft takes, it is good fun, and in two or three years when it has its first flower, it is even more fun.



'JULUIS NUCCIO' READY TO GO TO A CAMELLIA SHOW



A GRAFT OF 'DADDY MAC'



A GIBBED 'BUTTONS 'N BOWS'

Both natural and gibbed nonreticulata hybrids will bloom this month. The small formal double 'Buttons 'N Bows' looks good on the plant, at a show, or floating in a bowl.

Likewise, natural and gibbed *C. reticulata* hybrids will be seen at camellia shows and look stellar in the garden. This is illustrated by 'Lasca Beauty' which has a very large semidouble flower with thick textured petals. It was bred by Dr. Parks when he worked at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum and named by using the first letters in the name of this county arboretum.

Another very popular *C. reticulata* bred by Dr. Parks is the very large 'Dr. Clifford Parks' which has a red flower that blooms with several forms from semidouble to full peony. It is a classic red camellia rated as a top pick by both Tom and Jim Nuccio.



'LASCA BEAUTY'



'DR. CLIFFORD PARKS'



‘YIAO HUANG WEI ZI’

MARCH

Some of the most impressive *C. reticulata* cultivars hold off blooming until this month. ‘Yellow and Purple’ (‘Yiao Huang Wei Zi’) was registered in 2012, but I didn’t find one until 2021. It has a medium formal double creamy flower with touches of yellow in its center and violet pink, not true purple, on the petal edges. It stands out because it has numerous white formal double flowers which are uncommon characteristics for *C. reticulata* hybrids. It is so much fun to get a great camellia bred by our friend John Wang. It doubles the pleasure.

One of the largest peony formed red *C. reticulata* is the late blooming ‘Harold L. Paige.’ It is, therefore, a good candidate to gib so it will produce blooms for camellia shows. I find flowers into April here in Arcadia, California, which extends the camellia blooming season. It is the last to bloom in my garden which makes for a good ending for this article.



‘HAROLD L. PAIGE’



'FLAMINGO'

WHY CAMELLIAS AND BIRDS?

BY BRADFORD KING

What made you passionate about camellias? We each have a story to tell. What is yours? I saw my first camellia as a youngster at a spring flower show in Boston. It was *C. japonica* 'Pink Perfection' grown in a conservatory and placed at the entrance to Horticultural Hall. It was also the first time I heard the word japonica. Dad correctly told me it meant from Japan, and identified it as an evergreen flowering camellia bush. However, it was not until we moved to California in 1985 that a flame of passion was ignited. Seeing bright beautiful flowers in cold winter months did it for me after growing up in New England. My neighbors were satisfied to tell me their colors but were clueless as to their names. Fortunately, they told me about Nuccio's Nurseries in Altadena. Jude Nuccio identified five of the six camellias I showed him on my first visit. He was stuck on a medium semidouble white bloom. He called over a trim man of about sixty dressed in a clean bright T-shirt who quickly identified it as 'Alba Superba.' This was how I met Julius Nuccio. Over the next few years, as my collection was built, I met his sons Tom and Jim who now run the nursery.

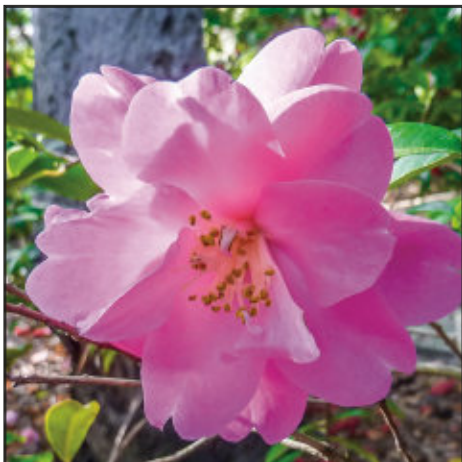


'ALBA SUPERBA'

I learned about birds and gardening on my grandparent's farm in East Taunton, Massachusetts. Pop was a civil engineer who ran the Taunton water company but kept, chickens, ducks, geese, and an old horse named Goldie. Dad and Pop plowed and planted a large vegetable garden every year. Mom and Gram harvested, cooked, baked, and canned. We bonded over meals and walks to the pond



A WESTERN BLUEBIRD



C. sasanqua 'BLUEBIRD'

picking blueberries and identifying birds and flowers.

We competed to see the first bluebird return to the nesting box seen from the kitchen window. Gram usually won, as the kitchen was her domain. It was the first bird I added to my Life List. It is still a favorite, especially as it has rebounded from near extinction due to the use of DDT. Today I enjoy Western Bluebirds finding bugs in the grass and brooding their young.

As you know, there are no blue camellias, but there are several with a bluish pink flower like the *C. sasanqua* 'Bluebird.' Whenever I see it, memories of my grandparents and parents are triggered.

The iconic bird in the Los Angeles Arboretum is the Peacock. Lucky Baldwin created a garden paradise in the early 1900s and imported three



PEACOCK



'TAMA PEACOCK'

pair of Peacocks from China. The flock has grown to about 250 on this ranch that has become the Arboretum. The pea hen and her chicks are light brown which makes them blend with their environment, while the male struts and shows his beautiful tail to attract her and ward off competitors.

The *C. japonica* 'Tama Peacock' is a small to medium maroon flower with a white border. What makes it flashy like a Peacock is the way the maroon washes into the white border on upright petals.

A flock of flamingos in various tints of pink are a great bird sighting as is a cluster of *C. japonica* 'Flamingo' flowers nestled among its foliage. We don't see either very often. Flamingos are the national bird of the Bahamas and in the USA are popular plastic lawn ornaments. Did you know the ancient Romans ate their tongues as a delicacy? Thanks to the internet, we both now know this piece of trivia. Thank you, Alex Trebek. I have only seen 'Flamingo' in The Huntington Botanical Gardens.

Almost everyone knows seagulls, but only some can identify the dozens of types. The one we see at most ocean beaches and inland at local dumps is the Herring Gull whose image appears here. The Japanese named a medium white camellia with upright petals like the wings of a gull 'Miyako Dori' which means sea gull.

People frequently ask "what is your favorite camellia?" It changes for me to the most beautiful bloom in the garden. However, my favorite birds are the Hummingbirds. On the east coast the Ruby Throated Hummingbirds are migratory except in Southern Florida. We can see them at feeders and in the mountains where they breed every summer.



PEA HEN AND HER CHICKS



RUBY THROATED HUMMINGBIRD



'MIYAKO DORI'



A HERRING GULL

In Southern California we have both migrants and permanent residents. The most prolific residents are the Anna's Hummingbird, and the most beautiful are the male Allen's Hummingbirds. Every year one male dominates the front feeder keeping watch among the camellia foliage for any intruding males. The photo shows a male Allen's Hummingbird among the blooms of 'Adolphe Audusson Variegated' and a 'Prima Ballerina.'



MALE ALLEN'S ON THE FEEDER

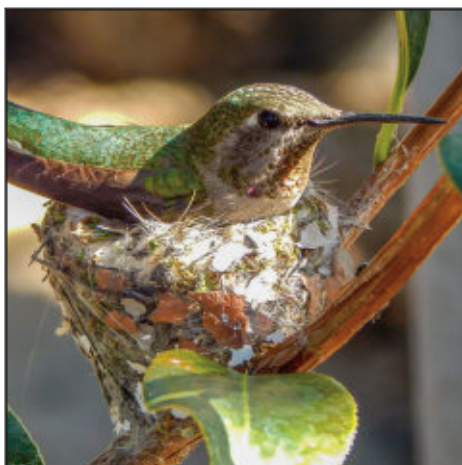


TWELVE HUMMINGBIRDS

On the backyard feeders during the summer, there are too many females, fledglings, and multiple males, plus an occasional migrant, for one male to dominate the feeder as is seen in the photo of a dozen hummingbirds. I have seen them nesting in camellias and this female Anna's in a rose bush

It is exciting when a new graft or newly purchased camellia has its first flower. The parallel with bird watching is seeing a new bird to add to the Birding Life List. I added the fine gentleman Black Chinned Hummingbird on a bird watching trip in 1978 in the Grand Canyon and his photo in 2020 on my hummingbird feeder.

In conclusion, gardening and bird watching are intimately connected for me to family. The pleasures of both have been passed on to our children and grandchildren.



FEMALE ON ITS NEST



BLACK CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD

Dragons

BY BRADFORD KING

The dragon is a large winged, horned, four-legged fire breathing mythical creature that is popular in folk lore and fantasy literature. They appear in the “Hobbit by J. R. R. Tolkien and “Harry Potter” by J. K. Rowling. In Chinese culture, the dragon is associated with good fortune. Marvelous dragon balloon sculptures and light shows highlight dragons in American garden shows. There are insects, fish, and several flowers named for dragons, including camellias.

The last several years the Los Angeles Arboretum has had a festival of lights that features balloon statuary. The most impressive of all the features is a huge dragon swimming in a lagoon. It is an awesome sight at night all lit up.







'NUCCIO'S DRAGONFLY'

In the Bellingham Botanical Garden in Washington, hundreds of beautiful lighted animals, insects, flowers, and cartoon characters can be viewed. One of the favorites is the "Blue Dragon."

The dragonfly is a carnivorous insect found near water. It is a familiar



A DRAGONFLY



THE BLUE DRAGON



‘DRAGON’S BREATH’

feature on pottery, paintings, statues, and jewelry. They are symbols of courage, strength, and happiness in Japan but sinister in European folklore. Poets like Lord Tennyson admired them for their bright colors and agile flying.

We admire hibiscus and azaleas for the range of their beautiful colored flowers. Hibiscus hybridizers have bred many wonderful and varied new hybrids. ‘Dragon’s Breath’ has a dark fire red petal with a central splash of gray resembling fire and smoke.

Nuccio’s Nurseries has introduced five “Dragon Azaleas.” They are an unusual cluster blooming spider chrysanthemum-like azalea which are eye catching. In 1999, they introduced ‘Nuccio’s Purple Dragon’ which inspired them to call them the “Dragon Azaleas.” They are illustrated here by ‘Nuccio’s Dragonfly.’

Two dramatic characteristics of dragons are flying and their ability to spout fire. The ‘Dragon Fireball’ camellia name is a wonderful way to describe a fire breathing dragon, and a camellia from Japan captures its flying ability. John Wang used *C. japonica* ‘Merry Christmas’ as the seed parent and pollen from ‘Virginia W. Cutter’ to get the beautiful red with genetic



‘DRAGON FIREBALL’ Photo by John Wang’

white marked anemone flower of ‘Dragon Fireball’ (‘Longhuozhu’).

‘Hiryu,’ a *C. vernalis*, has a profusion of small crimson red flowers that one can imagine flying around the garden. “Hiryu” means flying dragon.

The attractive *C. reticulata* hybrid ‘Ragged Dragon,’ bred in Oregon, has a large semidouble flower. The orange red flower color reminds us of a fire breathing dragon.

In closing, I wonder when we will see ‘Honglong Wuhan,’ a *C. azalea* seedling bred in China. The name means “red dragon dancing in the sky.” ‘



‘RAGGED DRAGON’



‘HONGLONG WUHAN’



CLUSTER OF 'HIRYU' FLOWERS

BULLNOSE CAMELLIA FLOWERS

BY BRADFORD KING

In building construction, bullnose is a rounded convex trim used in masonry work and ceramic tile. In camellias, it is when new flowers fail to open. This is more frequent with complicated forms like formal double, rose form, and anemone camellia blooms. Cool moist weather is a factor in causing bullnosing. Sunny days help flowers open. However, some camellia cultivars are more prone to bullnose than others. For example, ‘Elegans Supreme’ and ‘Elegans Champagne’ bullnose more frequently than ‘C. M. Wilson’ and ‘Elegans Variegated’ even though they are in the Elegans family sharing genetics that produce anemone blooms.

When ‘Elegans Splendor’ and ‘Elegans Champagne’ do bloom, they are very beautiful. This is illustrated by ‘Elegans Champagne,’ this issue’s cover flower.

While ‘Black Magic’ is a semidouble flower, it is noted for bullnosing due



BULLNOSE BLOOMS ON ‘ELEGANS CHAMPAGNE’



'BLACK MAGIC' BUD

to its thick waxy petals which make it a heavier flower than most semidouble camellias. Those of us who grow it wonder if buds will open. When it fully opens, it can be a show winning bloom.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT BULL NOSING?

When a potted cultivar is prone to bullnosing, it makes sense to move it to a warmer sunny location to see if that will help the buds open up.

With cultivars that are prone to bullnosing, a good strategy is to reduce buds to one bud per stem. In addition, these cultivars are good candidates for gibbing in order to get them to open. During winter, it is helpful to provide fertilizers with high levels of potassium,



'BLACK MAGIC' AS A SHOW WINNER



BULLNOSE BLOOM OF 'JUNIOR PROM'

especially to those known to bull-nose. Since camellias are dormant in the winter, care should be made to keep nitrogen 3 or less. Higher levels may cause the plant to break dormancy and produce new foliage, making it vulnerable to cold temperatures and even death.

Another strategy is to pick the bullnosed flowers and place in a warm room. I like to use warm wa-

ter mixed with a flower preservative like chrysal to help it last longer.

In the photo of the white bud of Junior Prom, note it has many black flecks which are the ash from the Bobcat fire blown by the Santa Ana winds. Pools, plants, streets, and walks had a layer of black soot every time the wind reappeared. I use a leaf blower and the California rake (hose water) to clean the plants and the patio.



'JUNIOR PROM'

Return to TOC

HIGO TREASURES FROM JAPAN: **‘MIYAKO-NO-HARU’**

BY BRADFORD KING

‘Miyako-no-haru’ is an early blooming Higo, usually the first Higo to bloom. The name is translated as “spring comes to town” or “spring comes to the capital.” It has a medium to large pink bloom with less than 100 stamens. It grows vigorously and upright with small oval leaves. The green pistil is taller than the 70 to 90 stamens. The small number of stamens for a Higo relegate it to the second tier. However, the flower is a lovely shade of pink.



PARTING SHOT:

Camellia sasanqua 'HANA DAIJIN' AND ITS SPORTS

BY BRADFORD KING

'Hana Daijin' (minister of flowers) is described in *Camellias of Japan* as having a deep red tubular semidouble flower. It was introduced in 1967. The *Camellia Nomenclature* describes it as a medium semidouble rose pink flower. It is unclear who imported it or how widely it has been grown in the USA. It is listed on Monrovia Nursery's website as a red semidouble flower. Regardless, its sports are interesting foliage camellias that can be found at Nuccio's Nurseries.

'Hana Daijin-Benten' is a foliage sport of 'Hana Daijin'. Nuccio's describes it as having an irregular green leaf with an occasional gray green stripe bordered



'HANA DAIJIN SPECIAL' LEAVES



'HANA DAIJIN SPECIAL'

with a light yellow margin. The large single flower is deep rose pink and has a light musky scent.

When Nuccio's caught a sport with beautiful irregular deep green leaves, a creamy border, and a medium to large single pink bloom, they named it 'Hana Daijin Special'. It blooms early to midseason on a bushy upright plant that sets buds even as a small plant. The lovely leaves attracted me to grow one on a garden path where its foliage is on view in front of other camelias all year long. It blooms in late October into November with a medium single pink flower that has a sweet musky scent.

Since its leaves are interesting and attractive, I purchased one to bonsai. It bloomed at Halloween this year.

The Southern California Camellia Facebook page has a video of 'Hana Daijin Special' growing in the ground and another as a bonsai. The *C. japonica* 'Kaleidoscope' was originated by Nuccio's Nurseries and introduced in 2019. The single flower is white with multiple stripes and dashes of red hues in various amounts. It is like a kaleidoscope in that each flower has different colored markings. One may be almost all white, another with a few markings, and a few almost all red. However, it is most striking with a mass of irregular colored markings in varying amounts and color tones from light red to brilliant red covering much of each petal. This is also the expected color form which is indeed reminiscent of a kaleidoscope.



'HANA DAIJIN-BENTEN'



'HANA DAIJIN-BENTEN' LEAVES



'HANA DAIJIN SPECIAL' BONSAI



C. longipedicellata

SPECIES:

C. LONGIPEDICELLATA

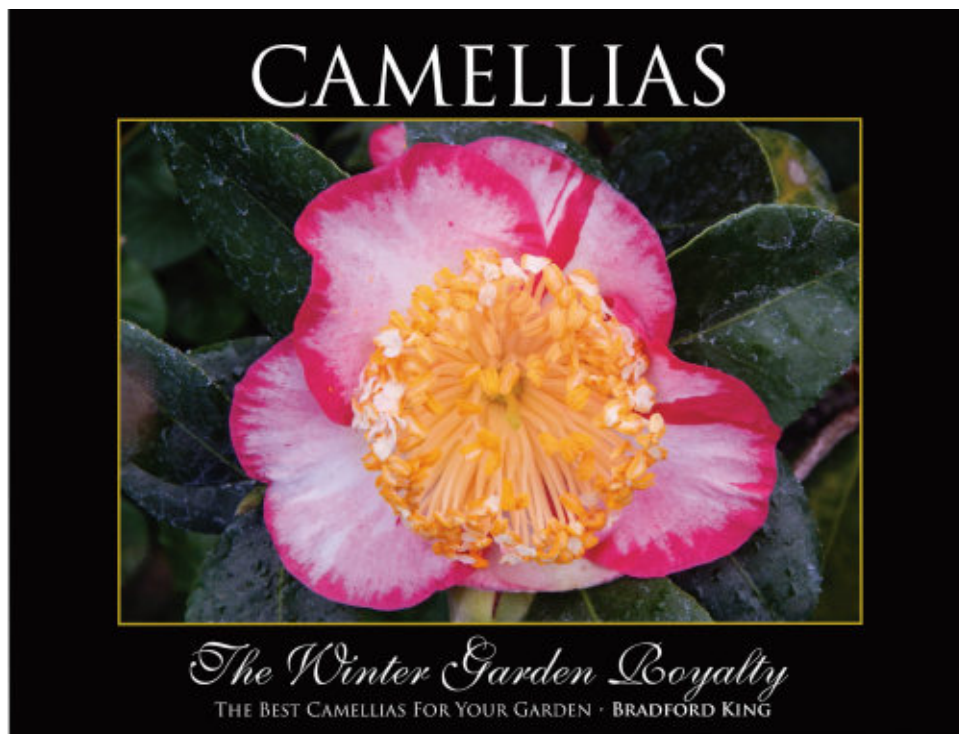
BY BRADFORD KING

The most interesting characteristic of *C. longipedicellata* is the long pedicel (stem) that holds the reddish bud and the resulting flower. The buds open to a small white flower that looks like a miniature parachute. Tom Nuccio and I like this long stem red toned bud but Jim Nuccio doesn't. How would you vote? Two out of three is more than enough votes to win an election. The leaves are dark green and ribbed like a sasanqua. New growth is an attractive bronze hue. The plant grows in an upright manner and blooms midseason.

CAMELLIAS

The Winter Garden Royalty

A magnificent book by Bradford King, editor of the Camellia Journal, Camellia Yearbook, and past President of the American Camellia Society.



200 BEAUTIFUL PHOTOS ILLUSTRATE THIS 150-PAGE BOOK

Available at the ACS Gift Shop with the proceeds going to support ACS.

George Harrison, President of The Pacific Camellia Society, said, “Brad’s book has set a new standard.”

Jack Dewar, a camellia hobbyist from Fayetteville North Carolina, wrote, “Brad, your book is sensational. You have broken the code on value of photography and must be in the top ten in our nation as a purveyor of beauty. You have gone into depth on cultivars more than anyone.”

Alexis Slafer, ACS Board Member, said, “Brad, I was reading your book last night. It is really fabulous & your photos are some of the best I’ve seen in plant books. Congratulations!”

Purchase your copy today!



ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD IN 'WILDFIRE'

Return to TOC

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

THE NEW NORMAL

BY BRADFORD KING

“The New Normal” in Southern California requires us to deal with the multi-year drought and the ongoing Covid pandemic. This means providing moisture to all plants, especially camellias, not overlooking cactus and succulents. The Southern California Camellia Society (SCCS) plans to have in person society meetings and camellia shows this camellia season. This means following the state and county safety measures—social distancing and face masks for in person gatherings.



The SCCS holds its meetings the third Thursday of the month at 7 PM in Ayres Hall at the Los Angeles County Arboretum from October through April. This November meeting was held on Tuesday evening, November 16,

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due to a “Light Show” held at the Arboretum. Jim Nuccio brought a variety of *Camellia sasanqua* from the nursery which he discussed. An outstanding documentary video of Nuccio’s Nurseries was also shown.

There is no meeting in December due to the holidays. Tom Nuccio is the featured presenter at the January 20th meeting. He will discuss and show a variety of interesting and beautiful camellias.

The camellia show season begins with a Camellia Judge’s Symposium which will be held at Descanso Gardens on January 8, 2022, from 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM. Please bring your own beverages and lunch, as due to Covid, no refreshments will be served. You are invited to this free camellia symposium even if you are not a camellia judge, because it is an excellent way to learn more about camellias. In addition, it is an opportunity to meet other camellia folk after a full year of no in person meetings. Renewing friendships and making new friends is a significant benefit of being in a camellia society.

This issue of the Camellia Review highlights “Nuccio’s Sun Camellias,” “Tom and Jim Nuccio’s Favorite Camellias,” and camellias with a long blooming season entitled “Going Long.” Typically, the Camellia Review has three feature articles and brief reports of a Higo camellia and a camellia species. Articles are illustrated by beautiful camellia photos. Each issue ends with the “Parting Shot” article which features ‘Kaleidoscope’ in this fall issue.

The Camellia Review is designed and laid out by Michelle Glush, a creative graphic designer. Karen Harrison and Lynn King ably handle proofreading.





‘NUCCIO’S GEM’

Return to TOC

TOM AND JIM NUCCIO'S CAMELLIA PICKS

BY BRADFORD KING

When pressed to choose the best ten camellias the nursery grows, Tom replied, “My choices tend to change during the season and over the years. However, when I think about white flowers, it is definitely ‘Nuccio’s Gem.’ I also favor ‘Silver Waves’ because of the beautiful golden stamens surrounding the wavy petals.”

Jim agrees with ‘Nuccio’s Gem’ for its tight formal double form and added ‘Ferris Wheel’ because it is the largest white flower with beautiful red streaks. They unanimously agreed that the large red flower named for their father, Julius Nuccio, would definitely make the list.

‘Nuccio’s Pearl’ was also a unanimous choice. This surprised me until I noticed that the flowers on the nursery plants are gorgeous and significantly better than in my home garden. This is not an uncommon experience for many of us visiting the nursery—a testament to Nuccio’s propagation and expert camellia care.



SILVER WAVES'

Ok! If you can only take ten camellias from the nursery, what are your other choices? ‘Yuletide’ they both claimed as the best C. sasanqua.

Tom would definitely choose ‘Buttons ‘n Bows,’ the small formal double



'JULIUS NUCCIO'

pink, to add to his list. Jim agreed and would add 'E. G. Waterhouse' and 'Taylor's Perfection' giving them three strong choices from the many nonreticulata hybrids.

Which of the many wonderful *C. reticulata* hybrids make your list? They



'FERRIS WHEEL'



'NUCCIO'S PEARL'



'BUTTONS 'N BOWS'

both would choose 'Dr. Clifford Parks' for its classic red bloom. Jim would add 'Barbara Goff' and 'Linda Carol,' as they have beautiful large pink flowers.

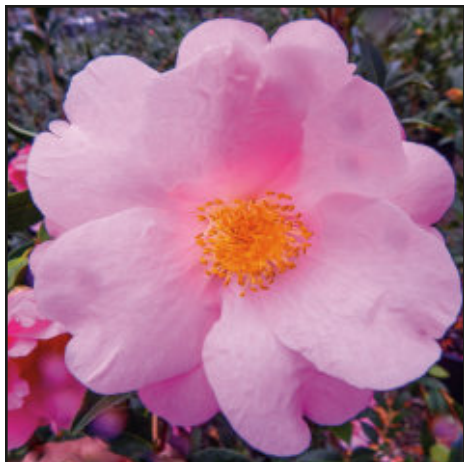
Tom would pick 'Frank Houser' and 'Mouchang' for its large coral pink bloom with wonderful stamens. Tom added "I really like stamens."



'YULETIDE'



'E.G. WATERHOUSE'



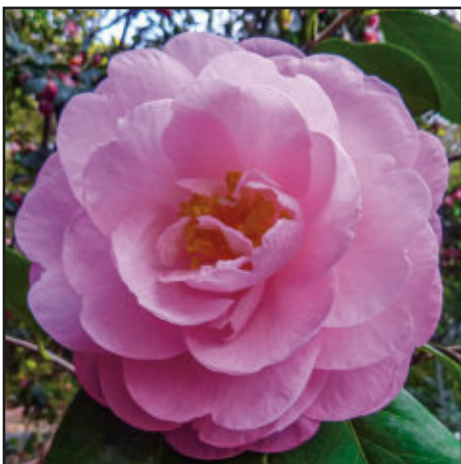
'TAYLOR'S PERFECTION'



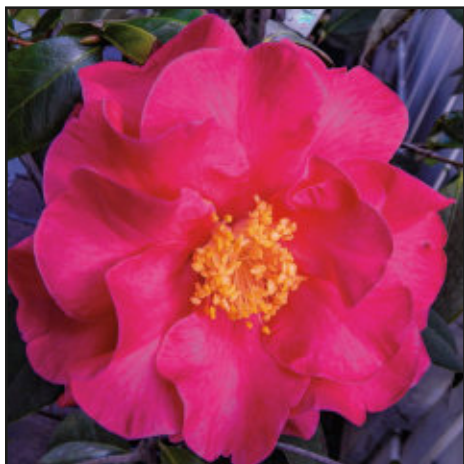
'DR. CLIFFORD PARKS'



'BARBARA GOFF'



'LINDA CAROL'



'FRANK HOUSER'



'MOUCHANG'



TOM NUCCIO

Photo by Brandon Slavinsk



JIM NUCCIO

Photo by Brandon Slavinsk

What a great list! I was also impressed how two brothers could agree and add a divergent choice in a manner that reflected mutual respect. As an older brother, it is my experience that this occurs when adolescent competitiveness diminishes and adult males mature.




NUCCIO'S NURSERIES



'SUNNYVALE CIRCUS'

Going Long

BY BRADFORD KING



“Going long” is a football expression for a long pass. It is a high-risk, high reward play because when successful it results in a first down, gaining multiple yards and at times a touchdown. Going long is a high reward low risk for camellia growers when seeking a long camellia blooming season. Like a touchdown, it scores points.

The camellia season begins with the fall blooming *Camellia sasanqua* noted for tolerating full sun and producing many colorful flowers. There are hundreds registered, but most camellia nurseries will offer a few dozen. Some favorites are the late blooming silvery pink ‘Bert Jones’; ‘Double Rainbow’ with the classic white flower and a rose border; ‘Hugh Evans,’ an early profuse bloomer with single twisted petals; ‘Setsugekka’ with a large ruffled white flower, and ‘White Doves’ (‘Mine-no-yuki’), a low growing shrub with a white flower.

My favorites are ‘Old Glory’ with its white ruffled petals and a deep rose border; ‘Showa-no-sakae,’ with its lovely soft clear pink peony flower, and the single red with golden anthers of ‘Yuletide.’



'KANJIRO'



'EGAO'

In addition, I am growing a few of Yuri Panchul's Sunnyvale Sasanquas. It is especially fun to grow a local breeder's seedlings. 'Sunnyvale Circus' has a very interesting white flower with rose stipes which is rare for a sasanqua thanks to Yuri's hybridizing.

C. hiemalis and *C. vernalis* cultivars bridge the fall blooming *C. sasanqua* and the winter blooming *C. japonica*. Two of the very best *C. hiemalis* are 'Kanjiro' and 'Shishi-Gashira.' 'Kanjiro' grows vigorously upright with brilliant rose red semidouble flowers. It is one of the most versatile camellias, as it can be used as a specimen, hedge, espalier, bonsai, or rootstock. 'Shishi-Gashira' forms a neat full bushy short shrub with lots of small colorful rose red flowers.



'OO-LA-LA'



'AY-AY-AY!'



‘SHISHI-GASHIRA’



‘CARTER’S SUNBURST BLUSH’

The iconic *C. vernalis* is ‘Egao.’ The medium to large semidouble pink flower looks like a classic japonica and grows like a classic sasanqua. It transitions between these two species blooming periods. It grows vigorously upright and in a somewhat open manner.

Camellia cultivars with an early to late blooming season are like a football receiver who can catch short passes for first downs, take a hit on a medium pass across the middle, and can burn the opponent by catching a bomb. If you prefer a different comparison, how about an actress who can do Saturday Night Live comedy, a family sitcom on TV, and star on Broadway. This is what camellias that bloom early to late season mean to the camellia world. They are versatile stars!

‘Oo-La-La’ has a very showy flower and long blooming season. The medium pink flower is single to semidouble with red stripes and edges in white. There are occasional white markings on the petals. It grows upright and blooms from early to late season and was introduced by Nuccio’s Nurseries in 1991. In 1995, it sported a seedling that the Nuccio’s named ‘Ay-Ay-Ay!’ It too has a

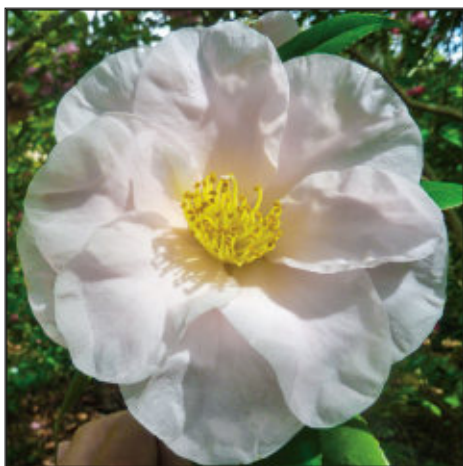
single to semidouble flower that is borne on an upright plant that blooms from early to late season. However, this mutation has a deep pink veined flower, red stripes, and some petals with white edges. They make good garden plants.

When ‘Carter’s Sunburst Pink’ sported, Hulyn Smith named this color mutation ‘Carter’s Sunburst Blush.’ Like the original ‘Carter’s Sunburst,’ it has a long blooming season but is a deeper shade of pink striped darker pink with a white border. It is a beautiful flower well worth growing along with ‘Carter’s Sunburst.’

The pale orchid pink very large semidouble ‘Moonlight Bay’ grows robustly in an upright and full manner. It is reminiscent of a full moon reflecting on the calm waters of a bay.

‘Nuccio’s Cameo’ has a medium to large pink formal double flower that occasionally opens as a rose form double. My plant has reliably bloomed for over 30 years from early to late season on an upright compact bushy plant which makes it an excellent landscape camellia. A cameo is a method of carving an object such as an engraved gem, item of jewelry, or vessel featuring a raised relief image. ‘Nuccio’s Cameo’ is like a beautiful engraved gem with its spiraled petals.

A popular camellia in California is ‘Nuccio’s Carousel.’ The medium to large semidouble flower has a soft pink tone in its center that flows into a deeper pink as it approaches the petal edges. When color tones deepen on a flower, it makes an especially beautiful and showy flower. It is unclear why this camellia is not widely grown in the southeast especially as it takes gib very well and has a long blooming season.



‘MOONLIGHT BAY’



‘NUCCIO’S CAMEO’



'NUCCIO'S CAROUSEL'



'PINK PERFECTION'

'Usu-Otomi,' better known as 'Pink Perfection,' is an outstanding small pink formal double that has a long blooming season. I find it tends to bloom readily late season but sparsely in early winter picking up steam as winter progress into spring. It grows vigorously in an upright manner and is cold tolerant. In Descanso Gardens I see 20 to 30-foot trees full of blooms in late winter which makes a beautiful sight.

Two white camellias with a long blooming season are 'Silver Cloud' and 'Silver Lace.' When a large white camellia is well formed and blemish free, it is gorgeous. 'Silver Cloud' has a very large peony flower that reminds us of the big fluffy cumulous clouds floating in the sky. 'Silver Lace' is frillier with its irregular upright petals forming a large to very large semidouble bloom. When a flower is described as lacy, it means it is delicate and has the weblike pattern of lace.



'SILVER CLOUD'



'SILVER LACE'

Return to T OC

HIGO TREASURES FROM JAPAN:

‘TANCHO’

BY BRADFORD KING

‘Tanchō’ is a classic Higo registered in 1929. ‘Tanchō’ (Manchurian Crane) has a pure white flower with random crimson stripes and 140 to 180 stamens. There are 7 or 8 petals. The stamens have white filaments, and the pistil has 3 to 5 parts that are taller than the stamens. The leaves are large and oval. The vivid red markings on the 7 white petals make a striking flower. It can be grown in the ground or in a pot. Its clear white petals and upright stamens help distinguish it from ‘Yamato-nishiki.’

The red crowned crane, also known as the Manchurian Crane, is a large East Asian crane which symbolizes luck, longevity, and fidelity.





‘DAZZLER’

NUCCIO'S NURSERIES SUN CAMELLIAS

BY BRADFORD KING

Nuccio's Nurseries has introduced more than two hundred camellia cultivars. If you are reading this, you most likely grow some of their camellias. However, there are some of their sun camellias you may have overlooked. This article will highlight those sun camellias bred by Nuccio's. Sun camellias include those classified as *C. sasanquas*, *C. hiemalis*, and *C. vernalis* because they bloom in the fall and early winter as well as thriving in full sun.

EARLY BLOOMERS

There are two early varieties that will bloom before November in Southern California that may begin to have flowers in August.

'Autumn Dawn' has a medium loose peony white flower that shades to deep pink on the petal edges. Dawn is the presence of light just before sunrise. This tells us that 'Autumn Dawn' is an early blooming variety.



'AUTUMN DAWN'

A brilliant semidouble rose red flower is dazzling, thus Nuccio's named it 'Dazzler.' It is a *C. hiemalis* cultivar that produces numerous flowers. *C. hiemalis* is thought to be a cross between *C. sasanqua* and *C. japonica* that occurred at some unknown time. If you want a long camellia blooming season, these are two cultivars to start your season.

MIDSEASON BLOOMERS

One of the classic colors for a sasanqua flower is white with a beautiful red



'DOUBLE RAINBOW'



'PAINTED DESERT'



'OLD GLORY'

or pink border. 'Double Rainbow' has a white semidouble flower with a lovely rose border. Another cultivar that is similar is 'Painted Desert' which has a creamy pale pink flower with a wonderful rose border on each petal. The Painted Desert is in the Four Corners area of Arizona. This National Park is noted for its brilliant-colored rock formations

Old Glory is a nickname for the flag of the United States. The original Old Glory is in the National Museum of American History which is part of the Smithsonian. 'Old Glory' has a single to semidouble white flower with deep rose pink decorating the ruffled petals which reminds us of a flag rippling in the air.

There is another camellia that also refers to the flag of the United States with its stripes and stars. 'Stars 'n Stripes' has a single white flower with rose red stripes. This plant is a



'STARS' N STRIPES'



‘SILVER DOLLAR’

nonreticulata hybrid that grows and blooms like a *C. sasanqua*. There are very few striped sun camellias so this is cultivar with an abundance of flowers. It makes a great addition to the garden.

There are several sun camellias with white flowers. ‘Silver Dollar’ has a



‘FRENCH VANILLA’



‘LIL’ ROSE’



medium peony white flower that grows on a compact mounding plant. The term silver dollar is often used for any white metal coin with a face value of one dollar. Many camellia names begin with the word silver which always means they are white.

A large single creamy white flower camellia was named 'French Vanilla.' The name refers to the classic French method of making vanilla ice cream using an egg custard base. Regular vanilla ice cream is made without eggs. The caramelized egg yolk gives it the creamy hue and a fragrance.

Rose pink makes a pretty flower. Two sun camellias have this lovely colored flower. 'Lil' Rose' has a small brilliant rose form to formal double flower that blooms on a spreading plant. 'Rosy Pillar' has a medium single flower that blooms

on a plant with a columnar growth habit making it a good fit for a small space.

There is another sun camellia with a columnar growth habit that has potential as a landscape plant or used in a group to serve as a screen or hedge. ‘Starry Pillar’ has a small single white flower that may have an occasional pink tone on the petal and on the bud. It has small dark green leaves.

‘Showa Supreme’ has medium peony soft clear pink flower with twisting petals which makes a very pretty and interesting bloom. The low growing plant makes it a good choice under a window or in front of taller camellias.

LATE BLOOMERS

There are two varieties introduced by Nuccio’s that will usually begin to bloom in December in Southern California. When ‘Egao’ produced a seedling with a large semidouble rose pink flower resembling an open rose, Nuccio’s named it ‘December Rose.’ It has a larger fuller flower than its parent. I remember Jude Nuccio saying it is a good variety but not as good as ‘Egao.’ This is reason





‘ROSY PILLAR’



‘DECEMBER ROSE’

number one why we love the Nuccio's-- they freely inform customers of the strengths and weakness of their camellias.

The most widely grown of Nuccio's sun camellias is 'Yuletide.' The single bright red flower has bright yellow stamens. The sturdy compact plant grows upright and tends to bloom during the holiday season. A single flower is striking as can be seen on the cover of this issue, and a mass planting in full bloom is spectacular.

In conclusion, sun camellias are grown as versatile landscape plants that have beautiful abundant flowers which light up the fall garden. We have discussed and illustrated those introduced and propagated by the world famous Nuccio's Nurseries in Altadena, California, where they all can be found. is spectacular.

In conclusion sun camellias are grown as versatile landscape plants that have beautiful abundant flowers that light up the fall garden. We have discussed and illustrate those introduced and propagated by the world famous Nuccio's Nurseries in Altadena, California, where they all can be found.



‘YULETIDE’

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HAGOROMO AND ITS SPORTS

BY BRADFORD KING

The camellia japonica 'Hagoromo' originated in Japan and was imported to Italy in 1885. It is better known in America as 'Magnoliaeflora.' It is unknown how it came to the US. It may have been imported from Europe by Magnolia Garden or by Japanese Americans in California directly from Japan. In the early 1900s, both Domoto and Star Nursery imported camellias from Japan to California. Who renamed it in America is unclear, but they appreciated the lovely light pink to blush semidouble magnolia shaped flower that blooms readily. 'Hagoromo,' the priority name, means "robe of feathers."

Walter F. "Hoody" Wilson was an internationally known camellia breeder who served as the superintendent at the LSU AgCenter at Hamond Station, Louisiana. Hody caught a mutation on 'Magnoliaeflora' with a pure white miniature to small anemone flower and registered it in 1961. This means he closely observed the original mutation to ensure it remained stable in color, size, and form for at least three years. He also propagated it by grafts and cuttings that bloomed consistently as a small, white, anemone flower. Since it

resembles a man's boutonniere, he named it 'Man Size.' He was awarded the John A. Tyler Miniature Award in 1979 for this flower. 'Man Size' has won points at camellia shows for over 30 years including 2019 when it earned 43 points as a small flower placing it third behind 'Les Marbury' and 'Tudor Baby.' It is one of my granddaughter's favorite camellia flowers and second favorite on my list of small japonicas just behind 'Tudor Baby Variegated.'

Rudy Moore was The Huntington Botanical Garden Camellia Curator for 20 years. In 1988, he registered 'Rudy's Magnoliaeflora.' The medium semidouble deep pink flower mutated from 'Magnoliaeflora.' The size, form, growth habit, and free blooming trait are consistent with 'Magnoliaeflora.' It is a color sport which is moderately consistent. It can be a pure dark pink bloom, have a few white lines, and on rare occasions a white petal or two. While I prefer the unmarked pink flower, a creative show entry with identical white lines makes a fine tray of like blooms. For example, three fresh pink flowers with one white line placed at 2 o'clock gets high points on uniformity which accounts for 50% in judging trays of like blooms.

In summary, we have two sports of 'Magnoliaeflora' that are popular. 'Man Size' is a size, form, and color mutation, and 'Rudy's Magnoliaeflora' represents a color mutation. Camellia mutations continue to provide us with wonderful surprises.



'MAN SIZE'



'RUDY'S MAGNOLIAEFLORA'

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C. miyagii

SPECIES:

C. MIYAGII

BY BRADFORD KING

This species has a small single white flower with narrow petals and a mild scent. The leaves are small. The plant blooms early to midseason on a sasanqua like upright plant and is sun tolerant. It originates from Okinawa, Japan.

It was first described in 1931 and was classified in 1984 as a separate species by Chang and Bartholomew. In 2000, Ming classified it as a *C. sasanqua*. Gao, Parks and Du's *Collected Species of the Genus Camellia* list it as a species but in the text state that it could be a variety of *C. sasanqua*. It is one of only four camellia species originating in Japan. *The Camellias of Japan*, by the Japanese Camellia Society, doesn't list it as a species which indicates they believe it is a variety of *C. sasanqua*.

In conclusion it should be planted and cared for as if it were a *C. sasanqua*.



PARTING SHOT:

KALEIDOSCOPE

BY BRADFORD KING

A kaleidoscope is made of at least two mirrors positioned at an angle to each other forming a triangle with a collection of objects positioned at one end of the mirrors and an eyehole at the other end. What you see when you look through that eyehole is only the portion of the objects that fall within the space of the triangle that are reflected. No two “looks” are ever the same, because there are a large number of objects that don’t fall in the triangle space, and they change in each new view.

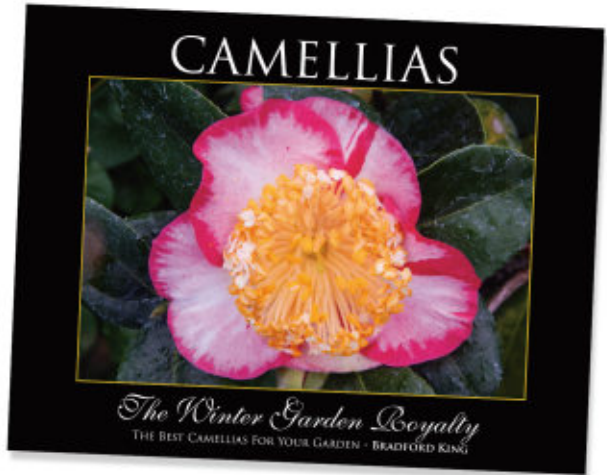
The name Kaleidoscope comes from Greek. ‘Kalos’ means beautiful, ‘eidos’ means shape, and ‘skopein’ means to look at, which when combined, means “A device for looking at beautiful forms.” It was invented by Sir David Brewster (1781-1868). This Scottish physicist is remembered for his experimental work in physical optics, especially the study of the polarization of light, including the discovery of the polarization angle which was named the Brewster Angle.

The *Camellia japonica* 'Kaleidoscope' was originated by Nuccio's Nurseries and introduced in 2019. The single flower is white with multiple stipes and dashes of red hues in various amounts. It is like a kaleidoscope in that each flower has different colored markings. One may be almost all white, another with a few markings, and a few almost all red. However, it is most striking with a mass of irregular-colored markings in varying amounts and color tones from light red to brilliant red covering much of each petal. This is also the expected color form which is indeed reminiscent of a kaleidoscope..



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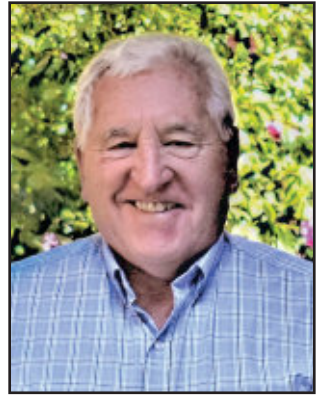
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THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

SPRING IS WHEN CAMELLIAS FLUSH NEW GROWTH

BY BRADFORD KING

While some camellias continue to bloom in spring notably *C. reticulata* and late blooming camellias like ‘Tudor Baby Variegated’ and ‘Spring Daze,’ it is the time camellias break dormancy and produce new leaves. Most begin as light green and become darker with age and others are tones of red before becoming green. One of the most beautiful is ‘Bella Jinhua’ which has deep mahogany foliage which unfortunately turns a muddy reddish hue with age. The bloom is a sport from ‘Nuccio’s Bella Rossa’ first discovered by Fu Binzhong, Jinhua Flower Seed Horticultural Company. This Chinese name means “red leaf



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bella.” Monrovia Nursery is propagating a mutation they are calling ‘Mon-Belle’ and listing it for sale as ‘Vestito Rossa.’ My Monrovia plant’s flowers and foliage look just like the ‘Bella Jinhua’ propagated and sold at Nuccio’s Nurseries. ‘Bella Jinhua’ serves as the cover photo. It has won best of show in Northern California and was awarded the Sewell Mutant Award in 2020.

Spring is the best time to prune camellias. Many plants will only require removing dead branches and some shaping to improve their looks. Additional removal of weak growth and stems that cross each other is also helpful. If you have a large camellia that requires rejuvenation, there is a video by Mark Crawford on the American Camellia Website that shows how it is done.

Since Southern California Camellia Society held no in-person meetings due to the Covid 19 pandemic, I produced videos emailed to you each month by Alexis Slafer. You can see all of them on the SCCS Facebook page. In addition, there are videos describing grafting and creating a camellia bonsai. There are also “fun” videos set to music highlighting “Camellia Fimbriation,” “Musical Camellias,” “Camellia Dragons” and “Religious Camellias” to name a few. A new video is posted every week for your enjoyment which are different from the monthly email videos.

The Southern California Council and SCCS are planning camellia shows for 2022 and hope to resume in-person society meetings when it is safe.

Stay safe and healthy until we can meet again.





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CALIFORNIA BRED CAMELLIA RETICULATA

BY BRADFORD KING

As you may recall, the Chinese Yunnan *Camellia reticulata* were imported to Descanso Gardens and Ralph Peer's estate in 1948. Hybridizing began in earnest during the 1950s with Howard Asper, Dr. Clifford Parks, Piet & Gaeta and Nuccio's Nurseries leading the way in Southern California and Frank Pursel in Northern California.

HOWARD ASPER

Asper was Curator of Camellias at Descanso Gardens, La Canada, California, where he helped build the camellia collection, oversaw camellia propagation and harvested camellias for the cut flower industry. He was present when the first *C. reticulata* were imported from China to Rancho del Descanso (Descanso Gardens). Hazel and Howard Asper bought ten acres of land near the town of Escondido, a city occupying a shallow valley ringed by rocky hills, just north of the city of San Diego where they built an attractive cottage in 1952. They proceeded to grow camellias on weekends and holidays when he worked at the Huntington Botanical Gardens. He retired in 1962 and grew thousands of camellia seedlings, introducing sixteen *C. reticulata* hybrids. The two most popular are 'Valley Knudsen' and 'Valentine Day.'

DR. CLIFFORD PARKS

When Clifford Parks, Ph.D., was a young botanist working in the Los Angeles County and State Arboretum in Arcadia, California, he was breeding *C. reticulata* hybrids. Two that are widely distributed and popular today are 'Dr. Clifford Parks' and 'LASCA Beauty.' 'Dr. Clifford Parks' has a very large red flower. It is one of the cultivars with several forms--semidouble, anemone, loose peony and full peony, and is still a camellia show winner.



‘DR. CLIFFORD PARKS’

‘LASCA Beauty’ is also capable of winning show points with its lovely soft pink semidouble flower. LASCA is the initials Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. Dr. Parks continued hybridizing when he moved to North Carolina but shifted to breeding cold hardy and yellow cultivars.

These cultivars were bred by Dr. Parks and named by The Northern California Camellia Society when Dr. Parks left the plants with them when he moved to North Carolina. While Cliff was reluctant to have a camellia named



‘LASCA BEAUTY’



‘FRANCIE L.’



‘NUCCIO’S RUBY



‘CURTAIN CALL’

for himself, others prevailed. Both of these cultivars have been awarded The Charolett C. Knox Reticulata Award.

NUCCIO’S NURSERIES

The American Camellia Society awards the Harris Hybrid Award each year to the originator of a seedling, not a sport, involving a cross of two or more camellia species. Nuccio’s Nurseries has won with three *C. reticulata* hybrids. The reticulata hybrids are ‘Francie L,’ which has a very large rose red semidouble flower with irregular upright wavy petals, ‘Nuccio’s Ruby’ which has a large semidouble rich dark red flower with ruffled petals and ‘Curtain Call,’ one of the largest *C. reticulata* hybrids which has a deep coral rose semidouble flower. There are also variegated forms of ‘Francie L.’ and ‘Nuccio’s Ruby’ that are very attractive with contrasting white markings.

In addition, ‘Francie L.,’ ‘Curtain Call’ and ‘Queen Bee’ have won the Charlotte C. Knox Reticulata Award. ‘Queen Bee’ has a very large irregular semidouble beautiful soft pink bloom. My ‘Queen Bee’ didn’t begin blooming until March, with beautiful flowers in early April this year.



‘QUEEN BEE’

MEYER PIET AND LEE GAETA

Meyer and his friend Lee hybridized camellias in the nineteen seventies and eighties at Meyer's home in Arcadia, California. They registered sixteen new *reticulata* hybrids. Most of these were named after family members.

'Emma Gaeta' is named after Lee's wife. When variegated, this bloom is a show winner with its deep rose pink heavily marked with splashes of white. In California, it was the biggest winner in the *reticulata* class until 'Frank Houser' came along.

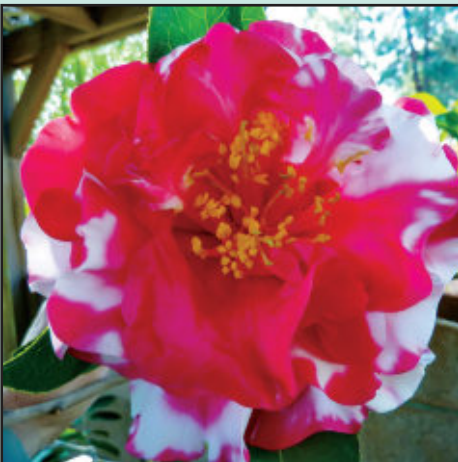
Many people consider 'Larry Piet' their best introduction. The rich dark red large to very large rose form double flower was named for Meyer and Bev's son.

Both of these cultivars were awarded the Charlotte C. Knox *Reticulata* Award by the American Camellia Society--'Emma Gaeta' in 1993 and 'Larry Piet' in 2000.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Camellia hobbyists from Northern California have bred some wonderful *C. reticulata* hybrids. These include 'Barbara Goff', 'Linda Carol', 'Ruta Haggmann', 'Holy Pure', 'Fine Holy', 'Harold L. Paige' and 'Mandalay Queen.'

The biggest *reticulata* winner in recent California camellia shows is 'Barbara Goff'. The very large complicated bloom is a lovely shade of pink. It was bred by Gordon Goff who named it for his wife. It blooms from early season



'EMMA GAETA VARIEGATED



'LINDA CAROL'



‘BARBARA GOFF’

to late season which is greatly appreciated.

Frank Pursel introduced ‘Linda Carol’ which has a very large soft pink semidouble flower. Pursel introduced 112 *C. reticulata* hybrids which is a huge number for an individual breeder. He had two key strategies: (1) new seedlings were grown in his basement under grow lights, and (2) all one-year-old hybrids were grafted because they grew better on rootstock than their own roots. It was awarded the Charlotte C. Knox Reticulata Award in 2006.



‘RUTA HAGMANN’



‘MANDALAY QUEEN’



'FINE PURE'

The very large light blush to coral pink peony flowers of 'Ruta Haggmann' bloom late season. It is a seedling of 'Curtain Call' which Mr. Haggmann named for his wife. This flower would win more at camellia shows if it bloomed earlier. It begins to bloom in my garden in Arcadia in March and some years has its best flowers in April. This includes even gibbed flowers. It was awarded the Charlotte C. Knox Reticulata Award in 2008.

Shade and Shadow Nursery registered 'Mandalay Queen' in 1966. The very large rose pink semidouble flower has numerous fluted petals which make a very attractive bloom. It was awarded the Charlotte C. Knox Reticulata Award in 1997

John Wang is the most recent hybridizer to introduce *C. reticulata* hybrids. He crossed *C. reticulata* hybrid 'Suzanne Weathers,' which has a creamy light pink bloom, with the white *C. japonica* 'Kona' to get 'Holy Pure' and 'Fine Pure,' both registered in 2007. His breeding goal is to get light-colored reticulatas which he achieved with these cultivars. 'Holy Pure' is large to very large rose form double to semidouble with inner white tinted pink

petals and outer petals darker pink. It was awarded the Charlotte C. Knox Award in 2018. 'Fine Pure' has a very large semidouble flower with light pink petals that become darker pink on the petal edges. This beauty is seen more on the East Coast than in California.

'Harold L. Paige' has a spectacular very large bright red rose form double to peony flower. The plant grows upright, vigorously and blooms late in the season. J. Osegueda of Oakland California crossed *C. japonica* 'Adolphe Audusson' with *C. reticulata* 'Crimson Robe' to get this seedling. It was named in 1972 for Harold L. Paige, the most senior man in the Northern California camellia world who was blind and 90 years of age when this cultivar was introduced to honor him. The flower was awarded the Albury Harris Hybrid Award and the Frank L. Stormont Reticulata Award in 1980. In 1986, it was added to the William E. Woodroof Camellia Hall of Fame. In 1988, it was the initial cultivar to be awarded the Charlotte C. Knox Reticulata Award. This wonderful flower continues to be popular and widely grown throughout the camellia world.



'HAROLD L. PAIGE'



DAN CHARVET BRED CAMELLIAS FOR LANDSCAPE BEAUTY

BY BRADFORD KING

Dan is in Fort Bragg, California, where the climate is too cold for most japonica cultivars to set seed. Therefore, Dan specialized in breeding with *C. reticulata* and other camellia species, especially those with fragrance. He found that *C. fraterna* and *C. pitardii* Var. *Yunnanica* and *C. grijsii* cross well with *C. reticulata* producing fertile fragrant seedlings with complex beautiful flower forms. Dan has over 50 years as a camellia breeder and owner of Heartwood Nursery. While some of his introductions are show camellias, he focused more on developing beautiful landscape camellias that are “self-grooming” (shed by itself) and require less water to thrive and bloom in the garden.

In addition, one of his breeding objectives was to use petal blight-resistant species and hybrids in a cross to make them resistant to petal blight.

He has registered twenty-five *camellia reticulata* hybrids and six nonreticulata hybrids before he retired and closed Heartland Nursery.

A sample of his reticulata hybrids includes ‘Bloomfield,’ Bloomfield Special,’ ‘Braxton Bragg,’ ‘City of Newberg,’ ‘Heartwood Bolero,’ ‘Heartwood Fandango’ and ‘Sheltered Cove.’

In 1985, Dan introduced the large to very large velvet red ‘Bloomfield’ which is one of his early registered camellias. When this bloom is fully variegated, it has a striking flower.

The City of Newberg, a suburb of Portland, Oregon, has a tradition of decorating the downtown with camellias. They asked Dan to name one of



‘BLOOMFIELD’



his cultivars City of Newberg when the state legislature named Newberg the “Camellia City of Oregon.” The city purchased many of this cultivar to be planted on the local golf course. There are plans to continue to propagate this cultivar to provide plants to Newberg residents. ‘The City of Newberg’ has a very large semidouble pink flower that shades lighter on the petal edges. It is a vigorous upright bushy plant with multiple camellia species, in addition to *C. reticulata* ‘Purple Gown,’ in its genetics. Dan is famous for using multiple species crosses in his introductions to reach his breeding goals. Dan has some catchy names for his introductions such as ‘Mother Superior,’ ‘Ms. Mo’



‘CITY OF NEWBERG’



‘Ms. Mo’



'HOLY MOSES'



'SHELTERED COVE'

which is a nonreticulata hybrid with a large pink semidouble to peony flower and a *C. sasanqua* 'Holy Moses' which has twisted and rolled pink petals.

'Sheltered Cove' is another catchy name for a camellia. This is one that we can see in The Huntington Botanical Gardens. The large rose form double *C. reticulata* hybrid has a bright medium pink flower with warm undertones which makes a beautiful bloom.

Dan bred a lovely sweet-scented camellia he named 'Breath of Heaven.' He apparently has not registered it. He told me the scent is like 'High Fragrance.' It is also a beautiful flower don't you think?



'BREATH OF HEAVEN'



‘CALIFORNIA’

CAMELLIAS DURING THE EARLY YEARS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

BY BRADFORD KING

The oldest camellia in California is 'California.' It came to America on a Japanese tramp steamer in 1888 as a three-year-old seedling. Webster Cate, a local rancher, purchased it off the dock in Redondo Beach Harbor for twenty-five cents. He planted it beside Durfee Road in Pico Rivera. In 1901, thirteen years later, its first bloom was a very large rose red flower and became known as 'Durfee Road Pink.' In 1942, on the recommendation of Vernon McCaskill, a prominent



'COVINA'

camellia nursery owner, it was renamed 'California.' It was moved to Park Hill, the estate of Ralph Peer, in 1958 because it was to be destroyed.

Before Park Hill was later sold, the Peer's paid for 'California' to be transported to its current home in the Huntington Botanical Gardens camellia collection in San Marino, California. The move was completed on January 29, 2002. The original trunk is completely rotted away but three new trunks are fifteen to twenty feet tall and produce many large red blooms every year.

'Covina' is probably the first camellia cultivar still around that was bred in Southern California.

The original plant was introduced in 1888 by Dr. Burdick, Glendora, California. It has been propagated extensively for its landscape value as it is one of the best *C. japonicas* that will survive in full sun.



MIYAKODORI'



'HANA FUKI'

THE HUNTINGTON

In 1905, The Huntington Botanical Gardens had only two camellias which had been planted in the 1890's near the original ranch House owned by the Shorba Family. Henry Huntington purchased the land in 1903.

William Hertrich, Superintendent of Gardens, purchased the first camellias for The Huntington Estate in 1910. A few cultivars from a local nursery were planted in an area that is now the Japanese Garden. Additional cultivars from Yokohama Nursery, Japan, were shipped in 1918. This nursery was founded in 1890 by Uhei and Hamakichi, father and son. They issued the English language catalogues and became very successful exporters of plants including camellias. William Hertrich met Mr. Suzuki, manager of the Yokohama Nursery, at the San Francisco World's Fair in 1915 and ordered some camellias which were not shipped until 1918. They were in good condition, between 4 and 6 feet tall. They are represented here by 'Miyakodori' (Seagull).

K. Sawada visited Southern California in 1948. When he returned home to Mobile, Alabama, 30 sasanquas were shipped to California to help develop the sasanqua collection on the east slope of the canyon. Today this is the area across from the Chinese Garden. Toichi Domoto also sent plants from Northern California to augment the collection.

Walter Hazelwood sent 35 scions from his Nursery in Australia to help develop a collection of camellias from Australia. Walter Hazelwood (1885-1980), along with his brother Harry, founded the Hazelwood Brothers Nursery business in 1908. Hazelwood donated hundreds of camellia plants

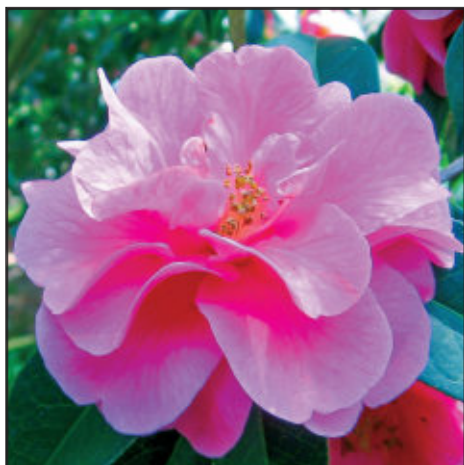
to the E. G. Waterhouse National Camellia Gardens–Sydney, when it began in 1969. Walter Hazelwood was one of the four founding members of the Australia Camellia Research Society. He was the society's first treasurer and elected one of the society's first three fellows in 1963. Walter was a Charter Member of the American Camellia Society and a life member of the Southern California Camellia Society. He was 95 years old when he died.

The Huntington's Board of Trustees authorized the opening of the camellia section to the public in 1952. A preview for Southern California Camellia Society members was held.

DESCANSO GARDENS

The Boddy family lived in La Canada since 1927. Manchester Boddy bought 165 acres of undeveloped land for a ranch and a new home in 1937. He hired noted horticulturist Howard Asper to build the camellia collection. Boddy purchased the inventory of F.M. Uyematsu, whose Star Nursery was one of the largest and most successful in California, when he was interned in 1942. He also bought the camellia inventory of F.W. Yoshimura, whose Mission Nursery operates today as San Gabriel Nursery, when he was forced to close the nursery due to the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. Many of these camellias are in the Japanese Garden area. This is illustrated by 'Hana Fuki,' imported by Star Nursery in 1930, which grows along the pathway to the Japanese Garden.

By 1941, Boddy had amassed a collection of 600 camellias with the as-



'SHOT SILK'



'VIRGIN'S BLUSH'



‘STRAWBERRY BLONDE’



‘MRS. JOSEPHINE HEARNE’

sistance of Asper. In 1945, Dr. Walter Lammerts joined Boddy and Asper at Descanso. They admired the giant flowers of *C. reticulata* and envisioned hybridizing with them, but none were available outside of China. In early 1948, Professor T. Tsai, a botanist at Kuming Institute, was able to ship 20 varieties with 15 surviving. Today Descanso Gardens maintains some of these original reticulatas from Yunnan China as well as some of their hybrids.

Descanso Gardens announced in January 1952 that the “magnificent gardens are now open to the public.” Admission was \$1.00.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA NURSERIES

There were as many as forty camellia nurseries in Southern California from the 1930s until the mid-1980s. Today they are not on the internet or documented in books, however, many advertised in the *Camellia Review* which is a helpful source. We are aware of the following nurseries in business in Southern California in “the early years.”

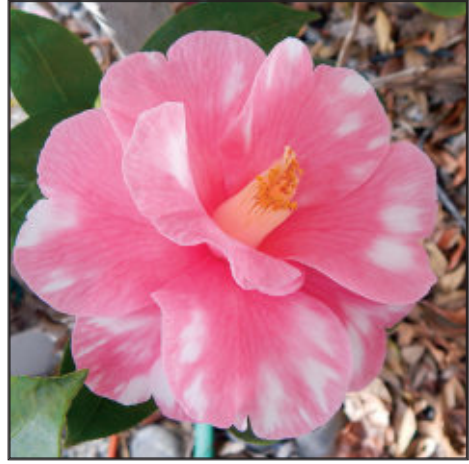
Boorman’s Camellia Gardens located in Temple City was offering Audusson Special, ‘C.M. Wilson,’ ‘Mrs. Tingley’ and ‘Virgin’s Blush’ among lesser-known varieties.

Marshall’s Camellia Nursery, Rosemead Boulevard in San Gabriel, offered “the best in rare and standard varieties.”

Carter’s Camellia Gardens located on East Garvey, Monterey Park, was selling ‘Strawberry Blonde,’ ‘Virgin’s Blush’ and a light pink sport of ‘Chandeleri Elegans.’



‘CARDINAL’S CAP’



‘WALTZ TIME VARIEGATED’

Don and Blanche Miller Camellias on North San Gabriel Boulevard, San Gabriel, advertised sasanquas and listed 14 japonicas in their ad.

Bamico says... “For the Best camellias shop at *Bamico* your one stop Garden Center.”

Camellia Seedlings Fairland advertised they had over 4,000 seedlings ages 2 to 7 years old. They were open January and February on Saturday and Sunday at Dover Road, Flintridge.

Coolidge Gardens, located on Foothill Boulevard, East Pasadena, was the “The Place to Go For Camellias.”

Councilman Camellia Acres in El Monte was introducing ‘Undaunted’ in a 1-gallon graft for \$15 or a 5-gallon graft for \$25 or on its own roots. It is a medium full peony carmine rose pink registered in 1952 by Councilman. Have you ever seen it? I haven’t.

Paul J. Howard’s *California Flowerland*, National Boulevard, Los Angeles, is the place to go for “choice nursery stock” including camellias.

The list of other nurseries includes *Surina’s Camellia Gardens* who introduced ‘Cardinal’s Cap,’ *Select Nurseries*, *Mt. Woodson Camellia Nursery*, *James Rare Plant Nursery*, *Tuttle Brothers Nursery of Pasadena* and *Hearne’s Nurseries* who registered ‘Mrs. Josephine Hearne.’

One of the most famous camellia nurseries was *Kramer Brothers* from Rancho Cucamonga. They introduced many camellias still propagated today such as ‘Kramer’s Supreme’ and ‘Spring Daze.’ *McCaskills*, located on Michelina in Pasadena, was one of the best nurseries. Vernon McCaskill introduced 72 japonica cultivars and 8 nonreticulata hybrids between 1930 and



'JOSHUA YOUTZ'

1988. The japonica cultivars that are still popular include 'Cloisonné,' 'Coronation,' 'Demi Tasse,' 'High Wide 'N Handsome,' 'Kewpie Doll,' 'Lady In Red,' 'Little Red Riding Hood' and 'White Nun.' He also registered the non-reticulata hybrid 'Waltz Time' and 'Waltz Time Variegated.' In addition, he introduced 'Star Above Star,' a wonderful *C. vernalis* seedling that is still a show winner.

By 1990 these nurseries were out of business due to the need for land to build homes for the influx of people and the expansion of business to Southern California.

Who was left? Nuccio's Nurseries that is who. They opened in 1935 and advertised 'Joshua Youtz' in the 1950's *Camellia Review*. In 1950, they introduced their first camellia, 'Katherine Nuccio,' named for their mother. Since then, they have introduced more than 200 camellia cultivars and 100 Nuccio's Azaleas. Can you name the Nuccios in this 1991 photo printed from the *Camellia Review*?



LEFT TO RIGHT: JUDE, JOE, JIM, JULIUS AND TOM.

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'NUCCIO'S PEARL' WITH TWO BUD CENTERS

TWINS TO SEXTUPLETS

BY BRADFORD KING

The chances of people having twins used to be 3% but have increased to 3.4% in recent years and to as high as 25% with fertility treatment according to data provided by Wikipedia. Fraternal twins run in families which is influenced by a maternal gene. They result from two eggs being fertilized so genetically they are just like any siblings sharing the same parents. Identical twins do not run in families; they are due to a random splitting of one egg. Occasionally, when cracking eggs for breakfast, we may find double yolks, which if they were fertile, could produce twins.



TWIN EGG YOLKS



TRAY OF THREE 'HAPPY HARLEQUIN'



TRAY OF THREE 'FRANK HOUSER'



TRAY OF 5 'JUNIOR PROM'



TRAY OF 5 'TAMA PEACOCK'

CAMELLIA TWINS

Camellias can have multiple blooms on the same branch, especially at the terminal axis. This is a common occurrence, but occasionally a formal double flower will have two bud centers which is like having twins. The flower may be interesting and remain beautiful but at a camellia show will get marked down on form. I see it more often on 'Nuccio's Pearl' than 'Sawada's Dream' or Nuccio's Cameo.' What have you observed?

TRIPLETS

Triplets can be either fraternal, identical or a combination. The most common are fraternal which means three eggs are fertilized in one pregnancy. Less common are triplets where one egg divides into two identical fetuses but the other does not. Least common are identical triplets; three fetuses from one egg. In this case, the original egg divides into two, and then one of those two zygotes divides again, but the other does not.

At camellia shows we create triplets when we enter three

like blooms in a tray of three. We are seeking a tray of “Identical Triplets,” that is three perfectly matched. However, we frequently get two out of three which still has a chance to win points, but when there are three unmatched blooms, like two boys with different features and a girl, it will never make it to the contention table.

QUINTUPLETS

I always remember the Dionne sisters from Canada born in 1934 because my grandmother had a set of five spoons all identical like these female identical quintuplets. You could only tell the spoons apart because each one had a name of one of the sisters. This is the goal when entering a tray of five like blooms at a camellia show. Variegated camellias can be beautiful, but virus variegation is so variable that it is almost impossible to get five which are uniform. Those cultivars that produce cookie cut flowers are much more likely to win.

SEXTUPLETS.

The reality television show “Jon & Kate Plus 8” has chronicled the lives of the Gosselin sextuplets. Sextuplets are rare, and so is using six camellias in a tray. It is aesthetically more pleasing to have an odd number of flowers. However, the Southern California Camellia Society wanted to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of Nuccio’s Nurseries. Therefore, we added a class called “Nuccio’s Tray of Six” which must have six different camellias registered by Nuccio’s Nurseries. Seventy percent is for Quality of Blooms and 30 percent for presentation.



NUCCIO’S TRAY OF 6 RED THEME



NUCCIO’S TRAY OF 6 PINK AND WHITE

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HIGO TREASURES FROM JAPAN:

‘NANA KOMACHI’

BY BRADFORD KING

‘Nana Komachi’ has been translated as “Seven nice girls,” “The seven faces of beauty” and “The seven pictures of Komachi.” It has a medium flower with a few red stripes on a light pink background with curled petals. There are 150 to 200 stamens with pale yellow filaments. It is an ancient cultivar dating to 1912. It has nice green oval leaves which are a frequent characteristic of Higo camellias which help in identifying it as a Higo when not in bloom. It can be grown in the ground and looks good in a bonsai dish.





SPECIES:

CAMELLIA CRASSICOLUMNNA

BY BRADFORD KING

This camellia is indigenous to China where its oil rich seeds are used for edible oil, and the leaves are used to make tea. It makes a good garden plant that grows into a twelve-foot tree or bush. The small bright red flowers are very attractive. The mature branches are gray white in color. The dark red flowers of *C. crassicolumnna* variety *crassicolumnna* caught my eye in the species collection in the Descanso Gardens display in February 2021.



'NIGHT RIDER' FLORAL ARRANGEMENT WITH MAROON LEAVES

PARTING SHOT:

UNUSUAL LEAF MARKINGS

BY BRADFORD KING

There are a few camellias that have beautiful new growth. When flowers are over, we can enjoy the colorful flush of new foliage. The new leaves on *C. japonica* "Tama Peacock" are a beautiful shade of maroon and attract lady bugs who forage among the leaves eating aphids.

The nonreticulata hybrid 'Night Rider' has dark maroon new foliage as well as red stems and roots. While we can't see the roots except when repotting, we can enjoy the maroon foliage in the spring.

'Ferris Wheel' has a very attractive large to very large flower with pink and red stripes. When in bloom, it can't be overlooked. However, have you



'FERRIS WHEEL'



'FERRIS WHEEL' LEAF

noticed some of the new growth has a reddish-brown blotch on its leaves? As the foliage matures, it disappears.

The dark red 'Bella Jinhua' flower with black veins is a sport from 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa.' The medium formal double flower is outstanding. The leaves are burgundy for months before turning light green with black streaks and flecks that are less attractive than the early growth.



'TAMA PEACOCK' NEW GROWTH



'BELLA JINHUA' FOLIAGE



‘LINDA CAROL’

Return to TOC

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

WINTER IS CAMELLIA BLOOMING SEASON

BY BRADFORD KING

While there are no local camellia shows in 2012 due to covid-19, camellia blooms can be seen by visiting The Huntington by appointment and at Descanso Gardens. Descanso is sponsoring a Camellia Festival in February. Southern California Camellia Society members Beth Stone, Jim Fitzpatrick, George Harrison, Barbara Council and I loaned camellia plants to Descanso for two entrance displays. In addition, Barbara Council, Beth Stone and George Harrison make camellia flower arrangements to put on display in the Japanese Garden.



The *Camellia Review* article “Beautiful California Bred Nonreticulata Hybrids” highlights the most beautiful introductions by Kramer Brothers, McCaskill Gardens and Nuccio’s Nurseries.

In “The Circus is Coming to Town” you will learn that Nuccio’s Nurseries introduced ‘Circus’ this season. It is the beautiful strawberry sport of ‘Ferris Wheel’ which will win points next year when the camellia shows resume.

“John Wang’s Breakthroughs in Camellia Breeding” describes his breeding program for developing light colored *C. reticulata* hybrids. The article is illustrated by his beautiful photos. The one we see is ‘Holy Pure’ (Sheng Jie) which is the cover photo. It is now possible to get his 2012 introduction ‘Yiao Hung Wei Zi’ at Nuccio’s. The name means “Yellow and Purple,” however, the medium formal double *C. reticulata* hybrid is a lovely light pink with deeper pink petal edges with an undertone of pale lavender pink.

Stay safe and healthy.



'J. C. WILLIAMS'

BEAUTIFUL CALIFORNIA BRED NONRETICULATA HYBRIDS

BY BRADFORD KING

Breeding between two different camellia species in modern times begins with John Charles Williams when *C. saluenensis* was introduced to the western world in 1917. John Charles Williams of Caerhays Castel in Cornwall, England, was a major sponsor for George Forrest plant collecting trips to China. Williams received seeds from Forrest of *C. saluenensis* which he shared with Col. Stephenson Clarke. They found the plants grew well, flowered freely and readily set seed. They began to make controlled crosses with *C. japonica* cultivars. In 1923 Williams' first crop of seedlings developed. The best seedling was named 'J. C. Williams' in 1940 to honor Williams who had died in 1939. This is the birth of "The Williamsaii Hybrids." Today there are 500 *C. saluenensis* hybrids ranging from miniature to large including new coral pink and lavender pink cultivars.

California hybridizers were on the forefront of breeding beautiful new hybrids without *C. reticulata* in the crosses. Kramer Brothers, McCaskill Gardens and Nuccio's Nurseries have introduced several wonderful new hybrids that continue to be enjoyed today.

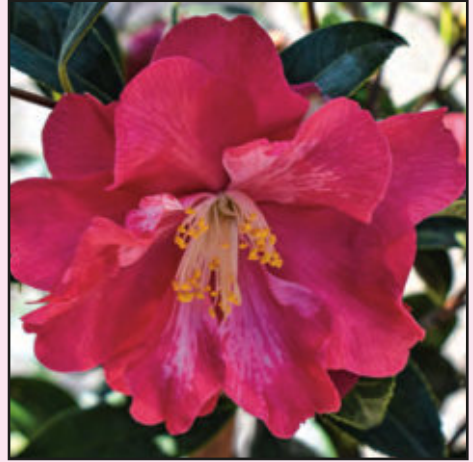
KRAMER BROTHERS

The nursery was founded on Long Island, New York, in 1896 by Otto and August Kramer. They moved to California in 1929. They were known for their azaleas, camellias and gardenias. Ben Mackall married August Kramer's daughter Marie in 1937. After August died, Ben and Marie managed the nursery until 1986. They built its reputation on azaleas and camellias. When the nursery closed, the land was sold to the San Antonio Community Hospital.

The nonreticulata hybrids they introduced are outstanding. Those that have survived the test of time are some of the show winners we exhibit today. These include 'Angel Wings', 'Coral Delight', 'Coral Delight Variegat-



'ANGEL WINGS'



'CORAL DELIGHT'

ed, 'First Blush', 'Kramer's Fluted Coral', 'Kramer's Fluted Coral Variegated', 'Pink Dahlia' and 'Spring Daze plus other cultivars less well known today. The four best we continue to see regularly in public and private gardens, that also win at camellia shows in California, are described and illustrated below.

'Angel Wings' is a cross between 'Dr. Tinsley' and *C. saluenensis* that resulted in a lovely medium semidouble light pink flower with narrow upright petals. The way the petals stand up look like the wings of an angel.

One of the delightful results of breeding with *C. saluenensis* is the new coral pink color tones. This can be seen with 'Coral Delight' and 'Coral Delight Variegated.' The small to medium semidouble flowers are deep coral pink. It is a cross using *C. saluenensis* as the parent and pollen from 'Dr.



'CORAL DELIGHT VARIEGATED'



'PINK DAHLIA'

Tinsley.' The white markings on the coral pink make an especially pretty bloom in the variegated form.

When Ben Mackall discovered a medium lavender pink dahlia shaped formal double flower with slender pointed petals, he and Marie named it 'Pink Dahlia.' The name fits this beautiful flower perfectly. It illustrates the beauty of the lavender pink color tones that can be inherited from a *C. saluenensis* seedling.

'Spring Daze' has a small white flower with beautiful rosy pink petal edges and at times a formal double light pink flower with coral pink edges. It also throws a white flower with blush colored petals that becomes deeper on the petal edges. It is, therefore, one of the few flowers where two forms may be sent to the contention table at a show. Which do you like best?

MCCASKILL GARDENS

Vernon McCaskill was a prolific camellia hybridizer who owned and operated McCaskill Gardens located in Pasadena, California. McCaskill Gardens introduced eight nonreticulata hybrids between 1930 and 1988. Most of these cultivars are not seen anymore, but the one we do see is 'Waltz Time'.

'Waltz Time' is a cross between the hybrid 'Williams Lavender,'



'SPRING DAZE'



'SPRING DAZE' IN APRIL



'SPRING DAZE'



‘WALTZ TIME’



‘WALTZ TIME VARIEGATED’

which has a single medium lavender pink flower, and the *C. japonica* ‘Kuro Tsubaki,’ which has a small black red semidouble flower. The color was inherited from ‘Williams Lavender’ and the form from its pollen parent. The abnormal gene that gives ‘Kuro Tsubaki’ its dark red color is not in evidence. The lilac pink medium flower blooms midseason on a vigorous bushy upright plant. The variegated form was introduced in 1962 by McCaskill and is even more popular. The wonderful white markings on pink petals makes a striking bloom which is capable of winning crystal at a camellia show.



‘ISLAND SUNSET’



‘BUTTONS ‘N BOWS’



‘JOE NUCCIO’

NUCCIO’S NURSERIES

Joe and Julius Nuccio began the Nuccio’s Nurseries in 1935 in their parent’s backyard. After World War II they purchased forty acres in Altadena, California, which is the present location. Today the Nursery is run by Julius’ two sons Tom and Jim. Joe’s son Julius worked in the nursery full-time for 47 years until he retired. He died in 2020. Nuccio’s Nurseries has introduced 205 new camellias of which at least 20 are nonreticulata hybrids. The most popular are highlighted here.

Two that have been given American Camellia Society Awards are ‘Island Sunset’ and ‘Buttons ‘n Bows.’ They won the Kathryn and Les Marbury Award made to the originator of the best small or small to medium *C. japonica* or nonreticulata hybrid.

‘Island Sunset’ has a medium semidouble flower with rich coral pink petals that become progressively lighter in the center. It is easy to imagine walking on the beach at sunset in the Caribbean islands and seeing a sunset that resembles ‘Island Sunset.’ The shades of pink and coral make a wonderful bloom. Hybrid camellias are noted for being floriferous and having new color tones.

‘Buttons ‘n Bows’ has a small beautiful light pink formal double flower that shades to deeper pink. It is one of the favorites of young women and children with the ruffled pink formal double flower resembling buttons and bows on a party dress. It wins as a single and trays of like blooms at camellia shows.



'FREEDOM BELL'

In 1991 a nonreticulata hybrid seedling of 'Garden Glory,' with a lovely orchid pink flower with incurved petal tips that are a deeper tone of pink, was introduced by Nuccio's Nurseries. It is a medium formal double that blooms early and may continue to have flowers throughout the camellia blooming season. The two-toned pink colors on a formal double flower, with the distinctive attractive incurved petals, make 'Joe Nuccio' a wonderful addition to a camellia collection. When I asked Tom and Jude how they named the flower 'Joe Nuccio,' Tom said his father Julius persuaded them. Jude recalled that his father really liked the flower which was the clincher. 'Joe Nuccio' is a great camellia that commemorates one of the founding fathers of Nuccio's Nurseries.

The small semidouble bright red flower of 'Freedom Bell' has numerous identical blooms year after year. It does well, therefore, in trays of 3 and 5 at camellia shows. The mass of flowers makes a show in the garden.

The miniature formal double to rose form double 'Buttermint' has creamy to pale yellow flowers. This *C. kissii* hybrid has clusters of buds up and down the stems. While the flowers easily shatter, the profusion of flowers makes an attractive display on an upright plant that blooms over a long period of time—early to late season.



'BUTTERMINT' CLUSTER

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CAMELLIA SPECIES:

C. ASSIMILIS

BY BRADFORD KING

This camellia is grown for its beautiful new light maroon foliage that as it matures turns green. The small single white flower blooms mid to late season and looks pretty among the leaves. The plant develops into an attractive shrub with a lacy look reaching 8 to 10 feet when mature. It is a species that has been used to make tea but is not in mass cultivation like *C. sinensis* (the tea plant).

It originates from China and specifically from Mt. Victoria, Hong Kong. It can be grown in mild climates with little frost. Despite its ornamental qualities, it has not been used often as a landscape or breeding species. If you like camellias that are distinctive and not widely grown, this species can be found at Nuccio's Nurseries.



C. assimilis FLOWER AND FOLIAGE Photos by Gene Phillips



C. NITIDISSIMA



'DAHLONEGA'

THE CAMELLIA GOLD RUSH

BY BRADFORD KING

There are more than 40 yellow camellia species that have been identified growing in China and Vietnam. The best known is *C. nitidissima* variety *nitidissima* generally just known as *C. nitidissima*. It has been used to develop new yellow camellias because the small cup shaped flower is a lovely deep shade of golden yellow.

THE DAHLONEGA GOLD RUSH

Dahlonega, Georgia, was the site of America's first gold rush in 1828. Dahlonega is Cherokee for gold. For many years, the pale creamy to light yellow of the formal double 'Dahlonega' was the best yellow toned camellia. It was introduced in 1986 by Dr. Walter Homeyer. It is a lovely small to medium camellia that slowly grows on an upright plant with nice gray bark. 'Dahlonega' is a very attractive plant with many flowers that tend to become more yellow as the bloom matures on the bush.

THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH

When James Marshall found gold at Sutter's Mill in Coloma, the California Gold Rush began on January 24, 1848. The news of gold brought about 300,000 people to California boosting the economy and helping to promote statehood. It also inadvertently assisted in bringing camellias to Sacramento, California.

Julius Nuccio, one of the founding brothers of the Nuccio's Nurseries, actively sought to develop a yellow camellia using *C. nitidissima* as a parent. He was able to propagate five seedlings that have found their way into the camellia world. They introduced 'Lemon Drop', an off white to pale yellow semidouble in 1981; followed by 'Honeymoon', a creamy white with yellow at the base of the petals in 1992; 'Golden Glow', a creamy white medium semidouble with light yellow at the base and a slight pink tone on the edges



‘LEMON DROP’



‘HONEYMOON’

and back of the petals in 1994; ‘Lemon Twist’, a creamy pale yellow flower in 1996 and ‘Buttermint’, a miniature cluster blooming very creamy to pale yellow rose form double in 1997.

Three of the best yellow hybrids from Japan were introduced to California by Nuccio’s Nurseries. Two are the work of Mr. Tadao Yumaguchi who back crossed ‘Kiko’ on *C. nitidissima* to get light-yellow hybrids. ‘Ki-No-Senritsu’ (Yellow Melody) has a lovely peony to loose peony formed flower that thrives in deep shade where it grows moderately fast but is a shy bloomer.

The most beautiful is ‘Senritsu-Ko’ (Golden Child) which has a light yellow



‘SENRITSU-KO’



‘GOLDEN GLOW’



‘KI-NO-SENRI TSU’

low small to medium formal to rose form flower with peach pink edges. It grows moderately fast in an upright open growth pattern. It sets multiple buds and flowers easily in midseason. In Southern California it has many more rose form flowers than formal double. It too prefers more shade than a typical *C. japonica*.

A small single light-yellow flower with slender red stripes named ‘Kogane Nishiki’ (Golden Brocade), bred by Kozro Yoshikawa, is also propagated by Nuccio’s Nurseries.

In conclusion, hybridizers like Dr. Clifford Parks have continued to introduce yellow camellias today. Most recently he introduced ‘Optical Illusion,’ a winner at the American Camellia Society show at Norfolk, Virginia, in 2020.



‘KOGANE NISHIKI’



‘OPTICAL ILLUSION’



'EVENING GLOW PEARL'



'FINE PURE' *Photo by Bradford King*

JOHN WANG'S BREAKTHROUGHS IN CAMELLIA BREEDING

BY BRADFORD KING • PHOTOS BY JOHN WANG

Since most of the *C. reticulata* hybrids have red and pink colored flowers, John Wang devoted himself to going in a new direction—to breed light colored cultivars. John Wang has two breeding strategies to get light colored *C. reticulata* flowers. One is using the white *C. japonica* 'Kona' with the *C. reticulata* 'Suzanne Withers' which has a white flower with pink tones that get deeper on the petal edges. This is how he bred 'Holy Pure', 'Fine Pure' and 'Evening Glow Pearl.'

'Holy Pure' (Sheng Jie) has a large to very large semidouble bloom with pink buds that open to a creamy white tinged with pink that gets darker on the petal edges. It was awarded The Charlotte C. Knox Reticulata Award by the American Camellia Society in 2018 and is propagated by Nuccio's Nurseries.

He varied the white japonica strategy beyond 'Kona' using other combinations of light-colored japonicas like 'Elaine's Betty', 'Nuccio's Jewel' and nonreticulata hybrid 'Honey-moon.' When he used 'Elaine's Betty,' it produced 'Lake Erhai Pearl' which is an alpine fault lake in Yunnan, China. The name means "ear shape sea" which is the shape of the lake.

Nanshan is a District in the city of Guangzhou, the capital of Guangdong Province. 'Nanshan Purple Jade' is a cross between *C. reticulata* 'Suzanne Withers' and 'Nuccio's Jewel.' This bloom has also been referred to as 'South Mountain Lavender Jade.'

'Putuo Purple Light' is a cross between 'Suzanne Withers' and 'Honey-



'HOLY PURE' Photo by Bradford King



‘LAKE ERHAI PEARL’

moon.’ Mount Putuo is famous in China as one of the four sacred Mountains of Buddhism.

John has given a Chinese name to all his cultivars, but the English names have been used in the *Camellia Nomenclature* followed by the Chinese name. This is illustrated by ‘Shining Jade’ whose Chinese name is ‘Jing.’

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

John has bred fragrant, yellow and other beautiful camellia cultivars. He



‘SOUTH MOUNTAIN LAVENDER JADE’



‘SHINING JADE’

bred ‘Suhzuo Embroidery’ which has a lovely yellow tinted bloom and the fragrant ‘Westlake Lotus.’

He used ‘Merry Christmas’ as the seed parent and pollen from ‘Virginia W. Cutter’ to get the beautiful anemone red flower with a genetic white border of ‘Dragon Fireball’ (‘Long-huozhu’). It grows vigorously, upright and blooms in midseason.

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

1. Pollination is done indoors where there is no interference from rain, wind, bees and temperature changes. Three days after the last flower is pollinated, they are moved outdoors.



‘PUTUO PURPLE LIGHT’

2. Cross pollination is done only with highly selected parents that have one or more characteristics matching the breeding goal. Multiple identical crosses are made to ensure that there are many seeds of the same cross.



EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD MAIDEN

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

There are four creative ways John Wang speeds up seedling growth.

1. A large pair of utility scissors is used to carefully cut a few open lines on the hard seed shell. These seeds are soaked in water overnight then most of the seed shell is peeled off.
2. Seeds are germinated in a special mini greenhouse converted from a fish tank equipped with a grow light. The electric heater is placed in a long and narrow jar covered by aluminum foil to prevent water evaporation.
3. Garden perlite pasteurized in a microwave is used as the media to germinate seeds. Each pot is individually enclosed with a transparent poly bag. When two small leaves appear, water soluble fertilizer, fortified with trace elements, is applied.
4. In March, the seedlings can be as tall as 6 inches and are ready for approach grafting. These grafted seedlings can bloom in one to two years. Several of Wang's new camellias are unregistered and propagated in China. This is illustrated by '2018#3' which is a *C. reticulata* hybrid. The beautiful



'SUHZUO EMBROIDERY'



'DRAGON FIREBALL'



‘WESTLAKE LOTUS’

large formal double flower has smooth petals with light pink edges shading to white in the center.

A *C. reticulata* hybrid propagated in China and the USA has small to medium white to creamy petals with a central splash of red. It has a fitting nickname ‘Red Heart.’ This rare white toned semidouble has red anthers and red pollen. It has pink on the petal edges, and the center turns brown when the pollen dries. In the future we hope to see it registered and distributed in America.



‘2018#3’



‘RED HEART’



'FERRIS WHEEL'



'FERRIS WHEEL' RED SPORT



'FERRIS WHEEL' BLUSH SPORT



BY BRADFORD KING

When we were young there was great excitement when the circus came to town. I can recall as a youngster seeing the circus train pull into town and watching the animals, clowns and other performers march through town to where the big top was being set up. Years later we took our kids to the “big top” but it was an indoor stadium. Today children have movies, TV, video games, iPhones and may never feel the excitement of a circus coming to town. As a camellia lover, you will be excited that ‘Circus’ is coming to town.

‘CIRCUS’

In September 2020 Nuccio’s Nurseries introduced ‘Circus.’ It is the beautiful strawberry sport of ‘Ferris Wheel.’ It too has a large to very large semidouble to loose peony flower with flared stamens and wonderful pink and red stripes.

A ‘Ferris Wheel’ plant can sport four different flowers: ‘Ferris Wheel’ (semidouble, loose peony and occasionally anemone formed blooms), a red semidouble with one or two white stripes, a blush bloom and the strawberry sport now named ‘Circus.’

Tom Nuccio and I like ‘Circus’ best, followed closely by ‘Ferris Wheel.’ Jim and Tom Nuccio have no intention of propagating the other two sports as they are not distinctive which is the key criterion for introducing a new cultivar.

I found it interesting to see that the new foliage on ‘Ferris Wheel’ and ‘Circus’ are different. This is due to the genetics of these two cultivars.

Tom Nuccio reported that these foliage characteristics are stable. In addition, the red sport has new foliage like ‘Circus’ but never like ‘Ferris Wheel.’



TRIO OF 'CIRCUS'

A THREE-RING CIRCUS

One of the most exciting parts of a circus is that there are three rings with entertainers doing something different in each ring plus loud music and colorful clowns running around honking horns and clanging bells. Exciting but confusing!

THERE IS A THREE-RING CAMELLIA CIRCUS COMING TO TOWN.

Monrovia is propagating a sport of 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa.' The trademark name is 'Vestito Rosso,' but its registration name is *C. Japonica* 'MonBella.' The plant label description says it has an abundance of beautiful crimson red flowers with glossy new midnight red foliage. The foliage image on the Monrovia website looks like what we see on 'Bella Jinhua.' However, the two plants Tom Nuccio got from Monrovia in October did not



'BELLA JINHUA'



NEW LEAVES ON 'FERRIS WHEEL'



NEW LEAVES ON 'CIRCUS'

have dark red on the leaves. Is this the same as the Chinese sport of 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa' named 'Bella Jinhua' (Red Leaved Bella)? They both have large red formal double flowers. It is well known that a camellia can mutate in different places and times.

At a circus we are challenged to look from ring to ring, eyes darting here and there until one performance is so engrossing, we stay focused on it. In this camellia three-ring circus we need close observation of the flower, foliage and growth habits to determine if they are different cultivars.



'BELLA JINHUA' LEAVES

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HIGO TREASURES FROM JAPAN:

‘ASAHI NISHIKI’

BY BRADFORD KING

In 1956 ‘Asahi Nishiki’ (Morning Brocade) was registered. It has a white flower with 6 or 7 petals with crimson blotches and stripes in variable amounts which make an elegant bloom. Like all Higo camellias it has 130 to 200 central stamens which in this case are yellowish white. The pistil is also yellowish white with the stigma divided into 4 or 5 parts. The green leaves are narrow and medium in size. It can be grown in the ground or a pot and makes an attractive bonsai due to the pure white flower with crimson markings on the large petals. While not widely grown in America, a good example can be found in the Higo section of The Huntington Botanical Gardens where this photo was taken.





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PARTING SHOT:

BIG RED RETICULATA: A GUYS FLOWER

BY BRADFORD KING

While the majority of camellia hybridizers are men, they most often name their introductions for their wives and daughters. However, there are exceptions because many men's favorite flowers are big and red.

Bill Woodroof, the first editor of the *Camellia Nomenclature*, was noted for declaring that a show winning flower needed to be big and red. Therefore, in 1989 Nuccio's named a very large scarlet semidouble to loose peony *C. reticulata* for him. 'Bill Woodroof' blooms midseason on a vigorous upright compact plant.

Bill Goertz from Duarte, California, named a large red semidouble to loose peony *C. reticulata* hybrid for himself in 1985. It blooms mid to late season on an upright compact plant. Another example of a large red *C. reticulata* hybrid named for a man. This time one he actually bred himself. The contrast of white markings on a red bloom is striking

One of the best *C. reticulata* hybrids is 'Harold L. Paige.' It is still a popular show flower because it has a very large bright red rose formal double to peony



'BILL GOERTZ'



'HAROLD L. PAIGE'

flower. The Huntington's plant is twenty feet tall and blooms every year. It is a late season bloomer that may need to be gibbed to enter a camellia show.

Al Gunn and Bill Goertz collaborated in introducing a very large semi-double flower with many curled petals for Al.

Hulyn Smith from Valdosta, Georgia, was another man who loved big red flowers. He named one of his favorite *C. reticulata* camellias for his friend Ray Gentry. 'Ray Gentry' has very large semidouble to loose peony red flowers with golden stamens and filaments. It grows vigorously, upright and blooms mid to late season. It was introduced in 2004 and has won many points in the Southeast camellia shows. It has only recently been grown in Southern California now that Nuccio's Nurseries is propagating it for sale. There is also a variegated form that has its fans.



'AL GUNN'



'RAY GENTRY'



'HAROLD L. PAIGE' IN BLOOM AT THE HUNTINGTON



‘RED HOTS’