

THE

# Camellia Review

A Publication of the Southern California Camellia Society



Cara Mia (The Loved One)

*Courtesy Nuccio's Nurseries*

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March, 1961

No. 5

One Dollar

# *Southern California Camellia Society Inc.*

An organization devoted to the advancement of the Camellia for the benefit of mankind—physically, mentally, and inspirationally.

The Society holds open meetings on the Second Tuesday of every month, November to April, inclusive at the San Marino Women's Club House, 1800 Huntington Drive, San Marino. A cut-camellia blossom exhibit at 7:30 o'clock regularly precedes the program which starts at 8:00.

Application for membership may be made by letter. Annual dues: \$6.00.

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2524 E. Glenoaks, Glendale 6  
Citrus 1-2769

WILBER FOSS, 2nd Vice-Pres.  
2345 Sherwood Rd., San Marino  
ATlantic 6-2072

R. W. RAGLAND, 1st Vice-Pres.  
1440 E. Chapman, Orange  
KEllogg 8-6135

MRS. MILDRED PITKIN, Sec'y-Treas.  
2465 Sherwood Rd., San Marino  
ATlantic 7-5826

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1105 N. San Dimas, San Dimas

LYNN H. CRAWFORD  
2202 N. Flower St., Santa Ana

FRANK FORD  
2043 Edgewood Dr., So. Pasadena

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Gordon, New South Wales, Australia

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P. O. Box 28  
Tirau, New Zealand

WM. DAWSON & SONS, LTD.  
Cannon House, Macklin St.  
London, W. C.2

## **THE CAMELLIA REVIEW**

HAROLD E. DRYDEN, Editor  
820 Winston Ave., San Marino  
SYcamore 3-4214

ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
A. H. Dekker  
Caryll W. Pitkin  
R. F. Dickson, Sr.

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## THE COVER FLOWER

### **C. japonica 'Cara Mia' (The Loved One)**

This month's cover flower was introduced last fall by Nuccio Brothers without fanfare, but its reception has made up for the lack of publicity. It is a large semi-double with pink petals that shade to blush pink toward the center. Undulating petals intermingle with prominent bright stamens. It is very floriferous and the unusual color toning with the petals and bright stamens intermingling distinguish it from the usual run of camellias. Texture and substance are excellent. Foliage is a very dark green with a medium sized leaf. It blooms from December through March.

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# THOUGHTS

*from the editor*

Maybe Frank Reed's article in last month's CAMELLIA REVIEW on the use of gibberellic acid ("Early Blooms and Gibberellic Acid," page 20) has precipitated some discussion that might turn out to be quite interesting. It has been suggested by some that while this method of obtaining early blooms and, it would appear in some cases, larger blooms is all right in itself, there is a valid question as to whether such blooms should be eligible for show competition under existing show classifications and regulations. Might a separate division be proper for blooms influenced by gibberellic acid if continued use of this "stimulant" brings the results that Frank Reed seems to be obtaining? On the other hand, it can be contended that this is just another item in the care of camellias for better blooms. We shall be glad to receive and print views on this subject.

We think that special attention should be called to the Edwards Metcalf Hybrid Trophy, which Ed (or Ned as you prefer) gave last year to the Southern California Camellia Society for use as a perpetual trophy for new Hybrid introductions. This trophy has but one purpose: to give proper recognition to new Hybrid camellias of outstanding quality. Review of the point scale for scoring by judges will convince anyone that only outstanding blooms will meet the minimum requirement of 80 points for consideration for the award. The field for competition is nation-wide. The winner will indeed have earned the recognition that will go with the trophy.

We again thank people who have written kindly about CAMELLIA REVIEW. We have only one more issue, May, before the summer recess. Before we know it, however, summer will have passed and we shall be working on the October 1961 issue. It has been fun getting out the issues we have edited this season. At the same time, the "water level" of subject material is a little lower than it was in the beginning. I shall welcome letters from people who will tell me what types of subjects or what titles they would like to see covered in future issues. I would like to receive articles written by people who have something to write about that is interesting or newsworthy. Your contributions in this manner will make CAMELLIA REVIEW that much more interesting to all readers.

*Harold E. Dyer*

# THE DESCANSO CAMELLIA SHOW MARCH 11-12, 1961

By Mark Anthony

Asst. Supt., Descanso Gardens

Again this year we at Descanso Gardens are looking forward to a bigger and better Camellia Show on March 11th and 12th. The show will be held along the paths and on the edge of the central lawn. As the tables will be laid out in groups of three to ten in a more or less continuous line, there is plenty of room for fifteen to twenty-five thousand people to view the show in one day.

To protect the flowers from wind or rain the one hundred tables will be covered with white polyethylene as in former years. In case of rain the side covers can be rolled down to make a dry tent for both flowers and people viewing the flowers. The flowers should keep a lot fresher this year as glass dishes filled with water will be used rather than wet redwood shavings as was used in former years.

The one hundred, eight foot tables will accommodate 3,500 camellia flowers. Last year the tables were filled to capacity with over 500 varieties of camellias in all colors and classes. Over 1,300 awards were given each year, so be sure to get your share.

The show this year will be the fifth held at Descanso Gardens under the auspices of the Los Angeles Camellia Council, Ltd. The first was held in 1957 in conjunction with the meeting of the American Camellia Society in Southern California. We built wooden tables around the oak trees on the lawn that year and being blessed with perfect weather the two-day show was viewed by 7,187 people.

The following year a giant circus tent was erected to house the show. Folding tables were used to display the flowers and flower arrangements on. A bull pen was roped off in the center of the tent to display the prize

winning flowers and the trophies. This year we were not so lucky as it rained both Saturday and part of Sunday. Even with rain 5,472 people came to the show, and the tent was too small.

In 1959 our present pipe frames with the polyethylene covers were constructed. These proved to be a very successful way to display the flowers and with the best of weather we were able to accommodate over 24,156 visitors in two days. To the beautiful flower arrangements in the Descanso Hospitality House was added, for the first time, the Kennels Division for men. This division added a real touch of humor to the show.

Last year the physical setup was the same as in 1959. The flowers were of very high quality and we had a great profusion of bloom but again the weather man was against us. With rain both days the attendance was cut down to 7,390. The reticulata camellias were especially fine in this show.

Now for the 1960 show on March 11th and 12th. Everything is being planned on a bigger and better scale. The tables and covers will be in place the week before. The night before the show Dan Roberts will have his crew on duty getting tables and signs ready. The gardens will be open at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday morning to receive flowers from all who are entering the show. Entries should be in by 9:00 a.m.

The flower arrangement show will be held in the Hospitality House under the direction of Mrs. Gene Boyd of Burbank. This is always a very popular part of the show along with the Kennels arrangements.

See you at the show!

## SHOW RESULTS

### POMONA VALLEY CAMELLIA SOCIETY SHOW

Pomona, Calif., February 4-5, 1961

- Sweepstakes — Frank Reed, Pasadena  
Best Japonica — 'C. M. Wilson', Mrs. Mary Thomas, San Dimas  
Best Japonica Runner-up — 'Ballet Dancer', Fred Hamilton, Santa Maria  
Japonicas in Court of Honor — 'Kramer's Supreme', 'Coral Pink Lotus',  
'Drama Girl', 'Purity', 'Mathotiana Supreme', 'Onetia Holland', 'Dr.  
John D. Bell', 'Silver Anniversary', 'Clarise Carlton', 'Guilio Nuccio',  
'Ballet Dancer', 'Billie McCaskill'.  
Best 3 or 5 Japonicas — 'Clarise Carleton', Dr. Leland E. Chow, Bakersfield  
Best Reticulata — 'Buddha', A. E. Krumm, Altadena  
Best Miniature — 'Pearl's Pet', Dr. Leland E. Chow, Bakersfield  
Best Hybrid — 'E. G. Waterhouse', R. W. Ragland, Orange  
Best Seedling — R. W. Ragland, Orange  
Best Commercial Display — Kramer Brothers Nurseries, Upland  
Theme Prize ("Holiday in Japan") — Mr. and Mrs. Kyle H. Bottoms, Chino  
Best 50 Labeled Varieties — Mr. and Mrs. Kyle H. Bottoms, Chino  
Best Container Plants (1 each - 5 varieties) — Mr. and Mrs. Harold Rowe,  
Upland

### SAN DIEGO CAMELLIA SOCIETY SHOW

San Diego, Calif., February 11-12, 1961

#### Super Sweepstakes Division

(Open to former Sweepstakes winners of any Camellia Show)

- Sweepstakes — R. W. Ragland, Orange  
Sweepstakes Runner-up — Edwards H. Metcalf, San Marino  
Best Japonica — 'White Nun', Dr. Cecil Eshelman, Sherman Oaks  
Best Japonica Runner-up — 'Mrs. D. W. Davis', Dr. Cecil Eshelman, Sherman  
Oaks  
Best Reticulata — 'Tali Queen', Dr. L. J. Taylor, Flintridge  
Best Reticulata Runner-up — 'Noble Pearl', Fred V. Hamilton, Santa Maria  
Best 3 or 5 Japonicas — 'Finlandia Var.', Mrs. Owen Henry, Chula Vista  
Best 3 or 5 Reticulatas — 'Confucius', Fred V. Hamilton, Santa Maria  
Best Miniature — 'Revere's Baby Pink', Edwards H. Metcalf, San Marino  
Best Hybrid or Species — 'Citation', Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Miller, El Cajon

#### Amateur Division

(Non-winners of Sweepstakes Award)

- Sweepstakes — George Kalin, La Mesa  
Sweepstakes Runner-up — A. H. Dekker, Glendale  
Best Japonica — 'Mathotiana Supreme', W. F. Goertz, San Marino  
Best Japonica Runner-up — 'Spring Sonnet', Walter Harmsen, Pomona  
Best Reticulata — 'Buddha', A. E. Krumm, Altadena  
Best Reticulata Runner-up — 'Crimson Robe', Norma Heard, San Diego  
Best 3 or 5 Japonicas — 'R. L. Wheeler', A. W. Garner, Glendale  
Best 3 or 5 Reticulatas — 'Crimson Robe', Norma Heard, San Diego  
Best Miniature — 'Fircone Var.', R. F. Dickson, Pasadena  
Best Hybrid or Species — 'Barbara Clark', A. H. Dekker, Glendale

## SHOW RESULTS (Continued)

### Best New Introduction — Amateur or Professional, Seedling or Sport

R. S. #6006 Seedling — R. W. Ragland, Orange

### Container Grown Plants

Blooming Plant Not Over 3 Feet in Height — 'Sassy' (seedling), Ferris H. Jones, La Mesa

Blooming Plant Over 6 Feet in Height — 'Glen 40', Ferris H. Jones, La Mesa

1 Year Old Grafted Plant — 'Carter's Sunburst', Lester Goodall, San Diego

2 Year Old Grafted Plant — 'Buddha', Lester Goodall, San Diego

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## TEMPLE CITY CAMELLIA SOCIETY SHOW

Temple City, Calif., February 18-19, 1961

Sweepstakes — Dr. Leland E. Chow, Bakersfield

Sweepstakes Runner-up — Dr. Cecil H. Eshelman, Sherman Oaks

Collector's Award — Edwards H. Metcalf, San Marino

Best Japonica Over 4½ in. — 'Lady in Red', Dr. Leland E. Chow, Bakersfield

Japonicas Over 4½ in. Court of Honor — 'Carter's Sunburst', 'Tomorrow', 'Glen 40'

Best Japonica Under 4½ in. — 'Dr. Tinsley', E. J. Alvarado, Ontario

Japonicas Under 4½ in. Court of Honor — 'Spring Sonnet', 'Eleanor Hagood', 'Cara Mia'

Best Reticulata — 'Noble Pearl', Masao Nichimoto, Pasadena

Best Reticulata Runner-up — 'Buddha', Masao Nichimoto, Pasadena

Best 3 Japonicas — 'Angel', Thos. H. Stull, Fresno

Best 3 Reticulatas — 'Chang's Temple', George Kalin, La Mesa

Best Miniature — 'Florence Daniell', John C. Robinson, La Canada

Best Miniature Runner-up — 'Kimberly Jr.', John C. Robinson, La Canada

Best Hybrid or Species — 'E. G. Waterhouse', Frank Reed, Pasadena

Best New Introduction — Seedling #N-5620, Nuccio's Nurseries

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## CALIFORNIA CAMELLIA SHOW SCHEDULE, 1961

March 4-5 — Kern County Camellia Society at Bakersfield

March 4-5 — Sacramento Camellia Society at Sacramento

March 5 — Central California Camellia Society at Fresno

March 11-12 — Los Angeles Camellia Council at Descanso Gardens, La Canada

March 18-19 — Northern California Camellia Society at Walnut Creek

## THE OTHER SIDE OF DESCANSO GARDENS

By John L. Threlkeld, Superintendent

In requesting this story your Editor said he would like to have a story on "Descanso Gardens, not the camellia part of it, but the other parts about which all too little is known."

Most people, when they enter the gardens sense an atmosphere of serenity and peace such as may be found only in a lovely garden setting. Few people realize the struggle that goes on behind the scenes to create this peaceful atmosphere. Let me illustrate this by relating a few problems involved in the every day management of Descanso Gardens.

One of our major problems is maintaining the gardens on a limited budget. This has made it necessary to employ certain gardening techniques which enables a few gardeners to accomplish a great deal. One of these techniques is the use of mulch which saves labor in watering and weeding. The entire 30 acre camellia

forest flourishes under the shade of a natural oak forest and has a thick blanket of natural oak leaf mulch. The 7 acres of roses are thriving under a deep mulch of shavings and saw dust.

Before mulching the roses six men were necessary to maintain the 7 acres during the summer. Even then the garden was not in top condition. After spending less than \$400.00 for mulch, and by converting the water system to overhead sprinklers we were able to maintain the area with two men, realizing a labor savings of over \$15,000.00 per year, plus a considerable savings of water. There has been one problem, however, that the two men needed assistance on. The flowers were so abundant that they could not keep up with removing the faded ones so another helper had to be assigned, part time, to the rose garden.



Japanese stone lanterns, pagodas and ornamental bridges were featured in the 1960 Festival of Garden Lights. Descanso Gardens is most famous for its huge camellia collection, however, numerous other attractions are featured at different times of the year.



A problem which is of minor importance to home camellia growers in disbudding. I am frequently asked if we disbud our camellias at Descanso. After receiving that question a couple of dozen times last camellia season I did a little calculation which may be of interest. In looking over the average size camellia plant I determined that there were approximately 500 buds to the plant. With Descanso's 100,000 plants I estimated that more than 50 million flower buds were in the camellia forest. To properly disbud, approximately 10% should be removed, or 5 million buds. Considering that a very fast worker could remove about 1,000 buds per hour this would involve approximately 5,000 man hours, or 625 man days. This work would need to be done in a period of approximately 30 working days which would take 21 men working 8 hours per day. It can be seen from these figures how a small problem becomes an impossible situation when magnified 100,000 times.

There is another problem which

someone will have to face sooner or later, both in home gardens and in our public plantings. That is the size to which camellias grow. Dr. Frederick G. Meyer with the United States Department of Agriculture, Crops Research Division, discovered camellias growing in Oporto, Portugal, which were planted in approximately 1550 A.D. These 400 year old camellia plants have trunks from 18 inches to 24 inches in diameter and are about 30 feet tall. The spread of each plant is about 30 feet. Basing figures on these dimensions, if the Descanso camellias were spaced properly, they could cover 2,248 acres in the year 2350.

This is a problem for future generations. I shall make no attempt to solve it now.

I have been asked on numerous occasions why we do not pick old camellia flowers from the plants, or ground, to limit flower rot disease. This presents a problem similar to disbudding. Removing old flowers

*(Continued on next page)*



The tropical patio setting pictured above was an exhibit in the Fall Festival of Garden Lights presented in Descanso Gardens last year. The Descanso Gardens Guild, Inc. sponsored this event and numerous other events throughout the year.

would require a staff three or four times the size of the existing staff and even then no other work would get done. We are hopeful that chemical control of petal blight may some day be possible but until that time it is like the common cold, we just have to learn to live with it.

These are some of the major things on the other side of Descanso Gardens. There are countless smaller problems and situations, such as the invasion two years ago by fourteen deer who decided the seven acre rose garden was to be their 'ice cream parlor'. Unlike our first father, they went from the wilderness into the garden and got into trouble.

Then there is the problem of keeping coyotes appeased. We consider them very good friends and encourage their presence in the gardens at all times, *after regular hours*. We like them because they eat great quantities of rabbits and ground squirrels.

A couple of years ago we found ourselves almost up to our knees in rabbits and ground squirrels. We couldn't understand it. Finally, someone discovered the holes in the fence had been repaired so the coyotes couldn't get in. We quickly made more holes which allowed the coyotes to feast for a while.

The wily creatures are smart though, they only kill the surplus leaving propagating stock. I sometimes wish there was some way we could trick them into eating all the rabbits and ground squirrels and changing their diet to dead camellia flowers and selective camellia buds.

After solving our routine problems we devote much of our time to working with such organizations as the Descanso Gardens Guild, Inc., Los Angeles Camellia Council, Ltd., Pacific Rose Society, California Native Plant Committee, etc. in the production and promotion of annual events such as the Annual Camellia Show,

the Daffodil Show, Festival of Garden Lights, Christmas Decoration Show, Rose Pruning Demonstration, California Native Plant Lectures and dozens of other special activities and exhibits.

The Children's Education Division serves 10,000 children annually in classes and on tours. The Adult Education Division serves 7,500 persons annually in classes and on tours. Approximately 5,200 jeep train tours are conducted each year. Weekly press releases are made to nearly 400 newspapers, radio and television stations in Southern California. Research work is performed in numerous fields which may facilitate better garden maintenance and development.

Through it all we plan for the future and strive to make Descanso Gardens of ever increasing benefit to residents and visitors in Los Angeles County. The constant increase in public use of our facilities, which at the present time is approximately 250,000 persons per year, is indicative of public interest in the Descanso facilities.

We are grateful for the enthusiastic support which Descanso Gardens receives from the various camellia organizations and from their individual members.

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## Los Angeles Society

Los Angeles Camellia Society at its February 7th meeting at the Hollywood Women's Club heard Leslie Marshall talk about growing and care of camellias. Mr. Marshall is one of the pioneer camellia nurserymen in Southern California and he took his audience back to the days of "I would like a white, or pink, or red camellia." The following were selected in the competition for the Arthur Freed cup: 'Lady Kay', 'Tomorrow Var.', 'Adolphe Audusson Special', 'Guilio Nuccio', 'Drama Girl', and 'Angel'.

## SOME COMMENTS ABOUT PRUNING

Harold L. Paige  
Lafayette, California

EDITOR'S NOTE: We asked Harold Paige to write an article on pruning for this issue of CAMELLIA REVIEW, because he is known in California as an authority on the subject. In reply he sent us a story which he had written for the October 1955 issue of "The Camellia Bulletin," published by Northern California Camellia Society, with the following statement: "In thinking about your request, I have tried to figure out some way to expand the subject or find a new kind of approach, but find that I have very little to offer that is new. I do find that as the years go by I become more sold on pruning — even very heavy pruning. I have yet to see any deleterious effects." We think you will agree with us that the following is entirely adequate, that it should be read by people who have not read it, and that it is worthy of being re-read by those who read it in its original printing five years ago. We thank the Northern California Camellia Society for giving us permission to reprint it.

Camellia hobbyists often grow camellias with completely different objectives. One may grow them for the sake of the flowers, without giving much thought to the plant itself. He will be happiest when he can put several hundred beautiful blooms on the table at show time. He will go to considerable trouble to protect his individual blossoms and get them to a show in good condition when stormy weather has ruined the flowers of other growers. Many a show has been saved by these lovers of camellia blooms — and they, in turn, are highly regarded by the harrassed Show Chairman who cannot sleep for wondering if there will be enough flowers to stage a show. However, it often happens that this singleness of purpose causes neglect of the plant, since it is common knowledge that very fine flowers can come from ragged and unkempt looking plants. It may also be somewhat significant that the winner of a sweepstakes award seldom takes home with him

the cup for the best grown plant in the show.

Another type of grower, just as enthusiastic about beautiful blooms, enjoys the plant for its own beauty, even when not in bloom. His idea of a camellia collection is a group of well groomed plants, not so many that their care becomes an impossible task, but still enough to give variety and at least some acquaintance with the best of the new varieties as they appear. To him nothing can be lovelier than a well grown, symmetrical plant, with its shining green leaves, just as it reaches the peak of its bloom, disbudded so that all flowers have room to open, all spent flowers removed, no fallen petals and enough protection from the blasts of winter to maintain this condition for several weeks. Unfortunately this picture of a perfect plant cannot be achieved without a deliberate program of pruning and shaping over a period of years.

The subject of pruning has been discussed before very ably. C. Norman Hastie, Jr. wrote an article entitled "Sharpen Up Those Rusty Shears" in the 1947 American Camellia Yearbook. Reading this article gave me the courage to prune heavily on various occasions when the condition of our plants seemed to demand it. The results obtained have borne out the truth of the statements made by Mr. Hastie. In his article he differentiated between "pruning" and "shearing," pruning being, he said, "for the health of the plant while shearing is for the pleasure of the owner who desires some special effect." Since he chose not to go into the subject of "shearing" at that time, it might be well to include "shearing" or shaping (which I think is a better

*(Continued on next page)*

word to describe what I have in mind) as well as pruning in this discussion.

If we are to have a perfect specimen plant we need to start early in the life of the plant. I prefer to start with a cutting or graft with a single stem. There are too many multiple-stemmed plants six feet or more in diameter taking up too much space in our lath house. If we had an acre or two of high shade under pines or oaks we would not need to be so particular. We do have ample shade in the summer (though rather dense) under walnut, pear and chestnut trees, but being deciduous these trees offer little protection to the flowers in the winter season. Having, then, to resort to lath houses for protection, we soon found such space to be an expensive item — that is, of course, if the lath house is to be at all good looking as well as utilitarian. So in our situation the single-stem plant proves to be the most desirable shape for most varieties. After all the camellia is a tree, not a shrub.

Beginning, then, with the small plant, it is usually found to be a very erratic grower. A few varieties will grow upright and take a symmetrical shape without much assistance but they are the exception rather than the rule. Most varieties have to be staked almost from the beginning and until the plant reaches a height of six or seven feet. This applies especially to the specimen plant in a container. Fortunately, the season's growth usually hardens down to a point where the stake can be removed at show time or during the blooming season but each season's new growth will require attention if symmetry is to be maintained. As the plant reaches its desired height it is more easily controlled. Stakes are no longer necessary. If wild growth appears in any direction it can be slowed down by pinching out the growth bud if discovered soon enough or by cutting

back to a latent side bud if discovered after growth has made considerable progress. Long branches that hang close to the ground should be removed. Never worry about sacrificing wood in order to shape a plant. If the plant has a good root system it will soon replace this wood with fresh and vigorous growth that needs only to be directed in the way it should go. Removal of wood already budded may seem a real loss. Actually the potentialities of the remaining buds are being increased to a point where a "Best Flower in the Show" may be the direct result. No one should object to that.

There are some problem children in the camellia world that almost defy the grower to make anything of them. Some of the most beautiful varieties seem to have many of the qualities of a vine. This is all to the good if there is space enough or a location suitable to espalier the plant. But having used up all such space, what can be done? Again the solution is to stake and tie. After growing a good sturdy leader long enough and strong enough to become self-supporting, the plant may be permitted to assume an umbrella shape. This type of pruning will often make a very beautiful plant. I have seen crippled plants that have become too tall and leggy worked over to become very lovely specimen plants. Incidentally, it takes two or three growing seasons to achieve this result, but it is worth the effort.

Figures 1 and 2 — a "before and after" sequence—illustrate the points which have been made above with reference to the need for shaping a camellia plant. The variety, **Dr. H. G. Mealing**, is one that is inclined to be spreading in habit. At the present stage of its growth it is a healthy, culturally well-grown plant, with a form that could be described as picturesque. However, given one or two more years of unattended growth it is apt to be a mass of snarled branches

much too close to the ground to be beautiful. By staking the main leader, cutting off low-growing branches and shortening some of the longer ones, we can expect — with a little additional pruning the next season or two — to have a beautiful plant which will present its blooms more nearly at eye level. This plant was pruned in mid-September, not the best time for heavy pruning but certainly it is much better to do it now than wait until another season has passed.

We who live in California are quite apt to have a considerable proportion of our plants in containers. They fit into our way of living. They can be moved in their blooming season to patios or porches to be replaced by later varieties as they in turn come

tremely hot, dry weather. One failure to water during intense dry heat may cause the root ball to shrink away very slightly from the side of the container. Subsequent waterings may then escape around the root ball instead of through it and soon serious trouble ensues, with loss of the fine feeder-root system. The following season finds us wondering what is wrong with the plant when its leaves begin to fall. Pruning now becomes a very real necessity. To be sure, the plant could be left to struggle along by itself with a fifty-fifty chance of survival, meanwhile standing as a silent rebuke to our unrealized carelessness. Rather than this, take a look at the root system. If the plant is badly rootbound (and these are the ones



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

into bloom. They provide a continuous parade of color from October until May. However, plants in containers are quite vulnerable to neglect and because of their tough, leathery leaves this season's neglect may not be apparent until next season arrives. Insects are not much of a problem and neither are diseases. The chief difficulty is lack of water during ex-

most likely to suffer damage) re-  
potting is called for. A new supply of humus is the breath of life to a container-grown camellia. Washing away the soil mixture from the outside inch of the root ball will reveal the extent of damage and indicate the amount of pruning necessary.

Usually severe pruning, is called  
*(Continued on next page)*

for. Probably from one-third to one-half of the top should come off. This may seem drastic but remember that an overgrown top with a weak root system is a constant liability. Cut back the long, thin branches first. If the wood is old with no latent buds showing and of small diameter, cut back to the main trunk. Heavier branches should be cut back to a strong lateral, keeping in mind that a future tree is now being shaped. If all but the last season's leaves have been lost, it may be necessary to keep some of the better branches, to be cut back later. Camellias are good stump sprouters as we all well know from our grafting failures. But leaves are necessary if a new root system is to grow quickly. Some adventitious buds will appear on the trunk and larger branches. Select the desirable ones and rub off the rest, keeping in mind again the future shape of the tree. In two growing seasons the plant should begin to look normal again.

Pressures connected with building a new home and moving a camellia collection into a new climate pro-

vided the unhappy experience from which two basic lessons (illustrated in Figures 3 and 4) were learned: (1) drastic surgical pruning may be needed to save the life of a damaged plant; (2) more than one season is needed to reshape the pruned invalid so that it becomes again a beautiful plant. These pictures show the progress being made by two plants — 6 weeks and 2 years, respectively, after drastic pruning.

A number of large plants in containers were badly damaged by 100-degree weather shortly after they were moved to their present location in Lafayette. Coming from the mild coastal climate of Oakland we were quite unprepared for the suddenness with which high heat and drying winds could wreck a container-grown camellia. Even after the lath house was built, damage continued until the lath spacing was narrowed and plants were more meticulously watered. The two plants shown in Figures 3 and 4 were all so badly damaged it was hard to decide whether an effort should be made to save them

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or they should be thrown out and burned.

No. 3 (**Shira Tama**) lost all but this season's leaves. It was badly root-bound, not having been repotted for five years. Pruned about 25% in August, 1955, now just six weeks later it has over 120 latent and adventitious buds developing. These will be watched and selected for vigor and for position of future branches. The remaining buds will be rubbed off. The plant will be repotted in October when the weather cools off. More pruning and shaping will be done at that time.

No. 4 (**Duncan Bell**) was cut back well over 50% in August, 1953. It was repotted at that time. Now, two years later, it is nearly, though

become shaded out each year. The whole center of the plant should be kept clear so that spray materials can reach every stem and twig. Most varieties grow so many laterals that the outside of the tree is just a mass of leaves and buds. If quality of bloom is desired it will pay to thin out branches each season. Any well kept orchard is a visual reminder that even mature trees growing in the ground need continued pruning if they are to avoid that rough, ungroomed look and continue in full production.

A recent article in the American Camellia Society Quarterly written by Roy T. Thompson of Glendale, Calif., laid considerable stress on maintaining "plant momentum." The point was made that a plant should never



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

still not quite, back to normal. It is well budded and we look forward to good flowers this season.

These are, we hope, the last of our damaged plants. At least a careful effort will be made to prevent future damage through drying out.

Large, older plants in the ground are almost always in need of pruning. Many small branches in the interior

be permitted to stand still. The rose grower looks for and expects several new canes to come up each year from the base of each rose bush. When the plant fails to renew itself he wonders if it is not time to pull it out and replace it with a new one. This process of plant renewal is easily seen in a plant that sends out shoots as  
(Continued on page 22)

# When? Why? How?

R. FLINN DICKSON SR.

## **Espaliering**

Here is something that can do a lot for a yard or garden. I began experimenting with it four or five years ago with results that to me are very pleasing. For example, I had a spot in my lath house where I wanted to screen out objects in a neighbor's yard. To do this I took a five year old 'Masterpiece' and espaliered it on a sixty inch square frame. Now, two years later, one looking at it is not conscious of anything beyond it. At one side of our house that is partly shaded I have two 'Debutantes' on four foot square frames, and when these plants are in full bloom they make quite a picture. A few other japonicas that lend themselves pretty well to espaliering are 'Elegans', 'Adolphe Audusson', 'Mathotiana', 'Lady Clare' and 'Brides Bouquet'.

If your taste runs to something delicate and graceful, then why not consider a sasanqua espalier? I have seen some that are very attractive and because a sasanqua will take more sun than most japonicas, these can be used on walls where the work is done on a series of parallel wires. Some I have seen used this way are, by their common names, 'Hugh Evans', 'Showano-Sakae', 'White Doves', 'Dawn' and 'Red Bird'. Now is a good time, before new growth gets too far advanced, to visit your nursery for a look at plants. For a further discussion see the article starting on page 39 in "Camellia Culture."

## **Grafting**

Here is this year's last chance, if you have root stock that is not putting out new growth yet. Your scion and root stock should both be dormant. If there is something you want and have not obtained it yet, let me suggest that you call on your nurseryman. I am sure that if he has what you want you can purchase scions, and get his advice on timeliness and the root stock to use. It is also well to have in mind that scions can be held refrigerated for a number of days. I do it by putting them in small tightly closed plastic bags. Do not wet the scion. First fill the bag with water, then empty it. The moisture remaining on the inside of the bag will be all that is needed.

## **Fertilizing**

Let's not get started too early. There may be some real cool weather in March and April, so wait for warm weather to begin your season's program. With sasanquas and those japonicas that have finished blooming, you might, if you want to make an early start, feed very lightly with a mild application of liquid fertilizer. But wait for the warm days to start using your dry chemical foods.



# WHAT ABOUT FERTILIZATION?

By Raymond R. Noyes

Before I discuss this subject I want to say that no research has ever been so interesting. I have read discussions on this subject by camellia growers with years of experience such as Mark Anthony, Dick Brown, Robert F. Cutter, O. L. Davis, F. R. Dickson, Cecil Eshelman, D. I. Feathers, Woodford F. Harrison, H. Harold Hume, Joe Littlefield, J. I. McClurkin, Caryll Pitkin, Reg Ragland, Harvey Short, Roy Thompson, E. C. Tourje, Dr. Herbert S. Wolfe. I have listened to many other experienced growers speak on fertilization.

There is a great difference in the way various successful growers care for their plants. It is easy to be influenced by the advice of others, so that you are continually trying new ways. For some years much that I read or heard was practiced on my plants. "What I hear I may forget; What I see I may remember, But what I do I will know." How applicable are these words to camellia growing!

The facts stated here have been established. These results are based on a study of the thinking of persons I have read or heard and the experience I have gained from my own plants, most of which are container grown. Each letter of the words "camellia fertilization" can have an

important meaning for camellia growers.

**C**

Care must be exercised in the proper use of commercial fertilizers, particularly in regard to the amount and manner of application. Chemical substances that camellias require for growth — carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen — are secured from the air and the supply is abundant. Nitrogen, phosphorous, and potash taken from the soil by the roots are commonly considered as being the most important because they are needed in larger amounts. These are all emphasized in fertilizers that are commonly used. Other essential elements, but needed in smaller quantities, some so small that they can hardly be measured, are copper, zinc, iron, magnesium, manganese, sulphur, and calcium. These substances may not be found in some soils or may be locked up with other materials, in the form of insoluble substances, so that they cannot be taken in by the roots.

**A**

All experts agree on one point — it is better to underfeed than to overfeed.

**M**

Minerals, when not already present  
*(Continued on next page)*

## California Redwood Plant Tubs

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in the soil in sufficient amount, are supplied in the form of fertilizers. More important than *what* you use is *how* you use it.

**E** Essentially the grower is to blame in many cases of injuries to camellias resulting from applying fertilizers, and not the fertilizers. Usually this has followed too high concentration or the use of the wrong materials or of too large amounts.

**L** Liquid fertilization and dry fertilization are two methods of applying fertilizer. Lightly and often is the rule for any of the readily soluble inorganic mixes.

**L** Limited soil area in a container as well as the limited ability of the soil to assimilate and disperse the fertilizer is an important consideration. Fertilize frequently in small amounts to avoid burning container grown plants. Drainage must be good and the plants watered properly and fed periodically for best results. Camellias whose native habitat is a land of abundant rainfall have become adapted to the acid soil that we have in these areas. There, rain washes out the alkaline salts and causes accumulation of organic acids from decaying vegetation. These are the conditions that we must duplicate for the best growth of camellias.

**I** In different areas the amount of fertilizer will vary. If you use a general concentrated fertilizer it is a good plan to cut in half the amount called for on the package. Just because a little gives good results, it does not follow that a lot will give even better results.

**A** Applying fertilizer may be done in several different ways. The common method is to scatter the dry fertilizer material thinly over the mulch or ground surface. It should not be placed up against trunks of plants but back several inches from small plants growing in open ground and a foot or two from trunks of large plants. The plants should be well watered. For quicker results liquid fertilizer may be dissolved in water and sprayed or sprinkled over the mulch or soil.

**F** Factors such as environment, planting time, amount of foliage, size of the plant, condition of the plant, expense, bother, and others which only you can evaluate determine the question of which method to use. Feeding twice a year, once as the end of the blooming season approaches and again in six weeks, is a commonly recommended practice. With this schedule don't let your second feeding wait until late in the summer.

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You may force later growth which could interfere with development of next year's flower buds. Many growers recommend small amounts frequently, once a month, every month in the year. Others feed on the light side once a month starting around April and ending in August. My plants respond best when fertilized first on March fifteenth and then at regular intervals, on the first of each month beginning in May and ending in September. A light feeding of cottonseed meal is given on October fifteenth. I use a dry fertilizer scattered thinly over the oak leaf mulch or ground surface. Consistency in feeding is important, no matter which schedule you may use.

**E** Experts who feed every month during the dormant season and once a month during the growing period feel that this brings the best results. Others advise letting the natural breakdown of the organic mulch supply the needed nutrients; this is of course what happens in nature.

**R** Range of feeding practice is about as wide as the difference in recommending potting and planting mediums and in both cases the desired end result is fundamentally the same. There is more than one way to feed your camellias — but none can really be called the best.

**T** Thorough watering before applying fertilizer unless you are using a hose sprayer with liquid food is always necessary. I remember in fertilizing crops on the farm where I grew up in eastern Nebraska, that the ground we fertilized heavily through the spring produced crops that were more susceptible to burning in a hot dry season. If we had a good rainy season we had good crops. Camellias, definitely, have been burned when plant food was applied to dry soil.

**I** Infrequent fertilization does little to help your plants. In choosing the feeding program for your camellias remember that any one of the recommended schedules will benefit your plants but you must stay with the program.

**L** Loss of fertilizer in container grown plants can often be caused by eroded cans. This also effects the drainage.

**I** In suitable quantities, fertilizers are definitely helpful in securing good growth and bloom. One of the most important things about fertilization is the amount of fertilizer given each time. This will depend not only on the size of the container but on the

*(Continued on page 24)*

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# A CALIFORNIA BOTANIC GARDEN

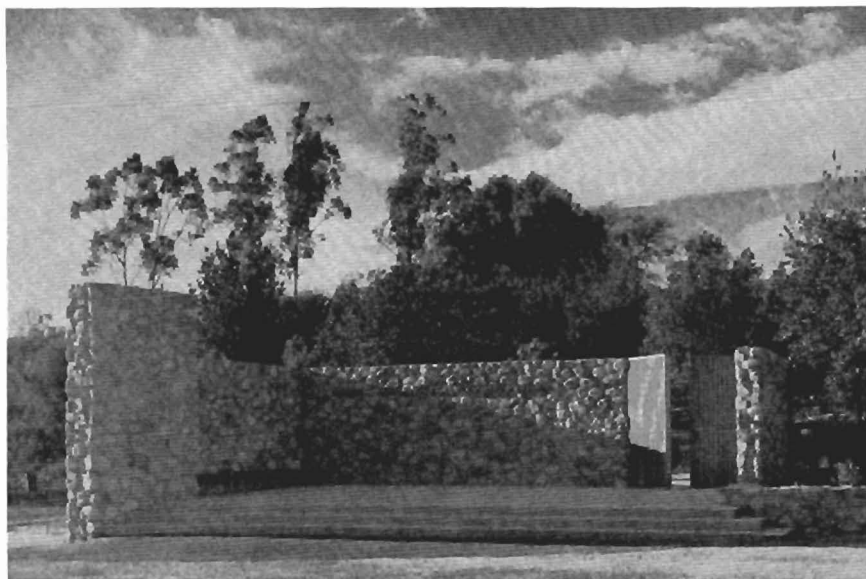
By Percy C. Everett

*"The development of any project always starts with an idea in the mind of a dreamer."* This was the first sentence in a descriptive article some years ago about a particular botanic garden. It was further stated that it is also necessary for someone to put that dream into action, and see it through. It is better still if the dreamer is also the one to give substance, time, energy, and thought to nurture it through the beginning stages until it is mature enough to go on its own. This was the beginning of Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden.

Originally, the germ for this Garden developed when the founder, Susanna Bixby Bryant, was searching for a country home site on her extensive land holdings in the Santa Ana River Canyon of Orange County. As ideas for the building progressed, so did the one which cradled the thought of a botanic garden until it became paramount. There were seem-

ingly insurmountable obstacles, but the long dormant idea had captivated the imagination of her fertile mind. Her tremendous energy, coupled with the will to build for posterity and backed by the necessary financial means, made the establishment of Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden on a solid scientific foundation ever prominent in her thoughts until her death on October 2, 1946.

In 1927, Susanna Bixby Bryant founded the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in memory of her father, John W. Bixby, a pioneer in the development of California and a great lover of all the natural beauties that surrounded him. It seems fitting that Mrs. Bryant, a native daughter, a person who loved the wild flowers and who was becoming increasingly concerned about the necessity for the conservation of our native flora because of the rapid growth of California, should dedicate this institution



Paul Kennedy - Frasher, Inc. - Photo - Pomona, California

**Main Entrance to Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden.**

for the perpetuation and study of the California flora in all the related fields of botany and horticulture.

For twenty-three years it occupied a 200-acre hill site on Rancho Santa Ana. Then, due to many problems, both present and in the foreseeable future, and to widen the scope of its operations, the Board of Trustees decided to move the Garden to its present location adjacent to the campuses of the Associated Colleges of Claremont.

During the past ten years, rapid progress has been made in the re-establishment of all the necessary physical facilities, and over 10,000 plants have been added each year to the various display areas. A large Administration Building was erected on the mesa for the use of students and staff. The Garden is affiliated with Claremont College and offers work leading to the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in various fields of botany. Essentially, nearly all of the physical necessities were erected or installed within the first two years. Expansion has made it necessary to provide additional equipment.

In order to present as wide a selection of native plants as possible in more or less naturalistic settings, and to increase the educational features, several special gardens have been laid out. These include a Rock Garden, Desert and Coastal Sand Dune Gardens, Desert Garden, and an area with plants of general economic and historical interest. Intensive experimental work is being carried on along several lines in the Experimental Grounds. An extensive general planting area is rapidly reaching mature proportions. With this variety of plantings, the visitor is able to observe a wide selection of plants blended together in such a manner as to give a rather complete picture of our native California flora.

Over fifty acres have been allotted

to developing what we call "Plant Communities." In each section is planted a wide variety of plant materials found naturally growing together in the wild. Twenty such Plant Communities are currently being developed, and although not now open to the public, they are so advanced in growth that we hope to open this section within the next two to three years.

The California flora is essentially spring flowering; therefore the most interesting time to visit the Garden to observe the greatest wealth of bloom is during the months of March through July. However, there is much to interest the gardener during the other months of the year. Besides the many kinds of *Ceanothus* (California Wild Lilac) and *Manzanitas* to be found, many other kinds of California native plants provide an array of color and interest throughout the spring months — the Western Redbud, *Fremontia*, *Penstemons*, *Monkeyflowers*, *Lilies*, *Yuccas*, *Wild Onions*, *Brodiaeas*, and nearly 200 kinds of annuals sown in masses.

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden is a privately endowed institution. It is located on a portion of what is known locally as Indian Hill Mesa and adjacent land to the east and north, about two blocks north of Foothill Boulevard (U.S. Highway 66), at 1500 North College Avenue, Claremont, California. The Garden is open every day of the year to 5 p.m., except on four holidays, New Year's Day, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Advance reservations for guide service for any day except Saturday and Sunday must be made well in advance by writing to the above address or telephoning National 6-3922. Attendants will be on the grounds on Saturday and Sunday for those seeking information and other help. Admission to the Garden is free.

# POINTS ON GROWING RETICULATAS AS TOLD BY JOE AND JULIUS NUCCIO

To Caryll W. Pitkin

Deceptively simple — the instructions from Editor Hal Dryden. Just go talk with Joe and Julius Nuccio about reticulatas and write down what they say.

Talking with Julius was easy (Joe was busy waiting on the customers) but putting down what he said in the form of an article for the CAMELLIA REVIEW is a little more difficult.

Wandering around the large well kept Nuccio Nursery one is left no doubt about its being the place to visit for authoritative information.

When the so-called Kunming Reticulatas were released in this country, Nuccio Nurseries bought a complete collection, at a cost of about \$600. The boys were understandably nervous. They had a large investment in something about which they knew very little. But the demand was great so they grafted everything that looked at all like a scion and almost as soon as it "took" there was a buyer ready to take it away. Consequently during the first few years they didn't keep any plants long enough to learn much about their growing habits.

But as their stock built up they were able to observe that reticulatas had very undesirable growing habits. They put out long scraggly shoots with few leaves and the older the bush got the worse it looked. They also noticed that the leaves developed what appeared to be fertilizer burn and sometimes the plants defoliated completely.

So their experiments began. Experience involving several years and hundreds of plants has enabled them to draw a few conclusions and to set up a few "Do and Don't" instructions which the average grower will probably want to follow.

There seem to be two important

"Don'ts" and one "Do" which should give us better reticulata plants. If we can get bushes somewhat compatible in appearance with the beautiful blooms which they produce retics will enjoy a new upsurge in popularity.

**Don't number 1. DON'T OVER-WATER!!!** As Julius explained, they hire boys to do the watering. They are sent into the lath houses and water everything whether it needs it or not. Nuccios noticed that with the same watering program as the japonicas got, the tubs containing retics were soggy. So they concluded that because of the sparser foliage, evaporation is less and they need less water. So they tried withholding water until the plants were almost completely dried out. Sometimes the leaves are beginning to droop before they water again. They noticed that new growth after they started this program was vigorous and healthy and there was a complete absence of "leaf burn." So now Julius and Joe have assumed personal responsibility for the retic house and water only when the plants are dry.

To prove their theory Julius showed me a block of Buddhas which had been grafted on heavy 5 gallon root stock. They had a high percentage of "take" and grew like Jack's beanstalk — for a while. Last July they began to defoliate and in a few weeks they were a sorry looking sight. They withdrew all water until they were completely dry. Now six months later, with water only sparingly applied, the new growth looks healthy and good. Julius isn't willing to say that water was the only ill but he says, "Draw your own conclusions."

**Don't number 2. DON'T OVER FERTILIZE!!!** It follows that it is

just as easy to over fertilize. On newly potted plants they use none at all. They skip the early feeding which the Japonicas get and fertilize after the first flush of growth slows down. If the plants appear healthy at that time they are given a light feeding of cottonseed meal. If the leaves show any burn it is skipped.

**Do. DO USE A LIGHT MIX!!!**

As additional insurance against over-watering they have increased the sand in their plant mix to 35%, with 35% silt and only 30% peat.

Rootstock may have some bearing on the appearance of the plants and their rate of growth. It is believed that all of the original plants brought over from China were grafts on 'Alba Plena' root stock. After observing the ungainly habits of the reticulata on other stock it was thought that here might be a clue. Since 'Alba Plena' grows slowly perhaps it was deliberately used to slow down the retics and prevent their leggy growth. But experiments with this failed to prove the theory. They tried grafting on Oliefera and Sasanqua roots but the results were no better.

By now Nuccios have built up a small stock of rejected reticulata seedlings. This year they plan to use these as root stock. It will be interesting to see how they turn out but Julius' guess is that they will be about the same and improvement in the appearance of the plants will come

as a result of the new plant mix and a careful program of watering and fertilizing.

"What about pruning?" we asked. "Careful pruning is essential both to shape the plant and to get superior quality blooms," Julius replied. He pointed out that Mr. Nishimoto who has exhibited some of the most spectacular 'Noble Pearls' anyone has ever seen prunes quite heavily. Incidentally, Mr. Nishimoto waters by hand and then only when his plants begin to show surface dryness.

Of all the varieties which Nuccios raise, which means all that are in this country, they think 'Moutancha' is the hardest to propagate and care for. One year they grafted 135 and got only 27 to grow. Close to 'Moutancha' on the difficult-to-graft scale are 'Purple Gown', 'Tail Queen' and 'Noble Pearl'. Although they stand a while without growing they find that summer grafts of these varieties heal much faster and this year all of these four varieties will be summer grafted. They feel sure that results will be better at that time of year.

In spite of Julius' emphasis on the problems connected with growing reticulatas in a large nursery this writer thought that on the whole the plants looked very good. They have about 2000 reticulata seedlings coming along and frankly about 99% of them looked excellent. Those in gallon

*(Continued on page 31)*

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## PRUNING (Continued)

long in one week as a camellia sends out in a whole season. It is not so easy to know when a camellia is standing still — when it has lost its “momentum.” Its growth cycles are so slow that it is hard to see the whole picture. Any plant, however, that fails to put out vigorous growth each year should be looked upon with suspicion as being a candidate for repotting or pruning, or both.

This matter of plant renewal is an important factor to consider in growing camellias. We know the leaves remain on the plant for about three seasons. After that they have lost their usefulness and nature sees to it that they drop off. Likewise many laterals have become so atrophied and hardened that they could not possibly produce a good flower at their tips. The sap has too far to go through a weakened cambium layer. Such poor wood is only a liability to the plant. Whether we prune to shape the plant or for the sake of the health of the plant, we should take satisfaction in knowing that the plant is being doubly benefited; first, in the removal of useless wood and second, in the increased flow of sap to the vigorous wood. Furthermore, the relationship of root system to the top growth is improved, especially if for any reason the root system has not grown in proportion to the top.

For pruning equipment two sizes of snap-cut shears should be used. When laterals are cut off at a main stem, stubs will be left which should be removed with a sharp knife. All cuts of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " or more should be covered with a sealing compound. It is a good idea to have an assortment of stakes and a roll of tie wire on hand to correct wayward stems or branches.

The ideal time to prune or shape is at the close of the blooming period. Few of us, however, can spare the time to do a big pruning job then. I

have found it necessary to extend my own pruning and shaping throughout the summer and fall months. Thinning out excess material can perhaps be done better at this later time. Some varieties such as the **Finlandia** group, **Mrs. Tingley** and many others send out too many closely-spaced laterals which are usually about the same length, crowding each other to a point that leaves little room for a perfect bloom to develop. Old, stringy wood that has outlived its usefulness and crossing branches that have been shaded out in the center of the plant should be removed whenever found, regardless of the time of year.

Yes, “Sharpen up those Rusty Shears” and carry them in your hip pocket the year round.



**Dr. Cecil H. Eshelman and wife Nadyne of Sherman Oaks, California, who won Best Japonica and Best Japonica Runner-up Awards in the Super Sweepstakes Division of the San Diego camellia show. Mrs. Eshelman is holding 'White Nun', the top winner. The runner-up was 'Mrs. D. W. Davis'.**



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### 'War Eagle'

It was almost a year ago to the day that I had the privilege of judging seedlings in the Birmingham Camellia Show with two very fine and capable gentlemen, Mr. Marbury and Dr. Habel, I am a pretty strong booster for western living, climate and all that we feel is tops on the Pacific Coast but on this occasion the seedlings entered at Birmingham with other named varieties were the finest collection I had seen — in fact the seedlings and flowers matched their growers' hospitality. At this time a seedling known as 'War Eagle' did not win the number one spot but came out second best. 'War Eagle' originated with Dr. Gilbert Fisher of Union Springs, Alabama and is said to frequently be over 5 inches in diameter and 3 inches in depth. Crimson red in color and a form that varies from loose double to almost full peony. As a loose double the beautiful stamens can be seen, however, in the peony

form there is just a slightest evidence of stamens.

The name 'War Eagle' came via Dr. Fisher's friends of University of Auburn alumni. Auburn University has a great yell called "War Eagle" and the students are frequently called the War Eagles. It will be most interesting to see how this seedling of Dr. Fisher performs on the West Coast.

### 'E. G. Waterhouse' (hybrid)

We are told the hybrid 'E. G. Waterhouse' is a chance hybrid seedling resulting from a parent plant of saluenensis. The story is this plant of saluenensis died but before or as it was doing so dropped seed. These seed were planted and the resulting seedling were distributed over the country side. A son of Mr. Waterhouse found the above flower and named it in honor of his father, E. G. Waterhouse.

My faith in the future of hybrids  
*(Continued on next page)*

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received a terrific shot in the arm when I saw my first flowers of 'E. G. Waterhouse'. A lovely light pink with a bright sheen, medium sized formal double. The variegated flower of 'E. G. Waterhouse' is said to be plumb gorgeous and most desirable.

At the present moment we have two named hybrids, 'E. G. Waterhouse' and 'Citation', flowering for our shows and these we truly feel worthy of nearly any one's camellia interest. At a later date I hope to write a more complete story on 'Citation' or as it was first known 'Williamsii Semi-double'.

### 'Holly Mac'

As one checks through the registration or listing of new camellias for information and description of new seedlings we notice that many are referred to as being similar to the variety 'Edwin Folk' for color or form of flower. 'Edwin Folk', being one of the older and more common varieties, it is still one of my favorites and news of this comparison always stirs my interest.

A very large red semi-double chance seedling of Mr. Grady McCord who was formally with the Magnolia Gardens but is now operating his own nursery has named this seedling for his grandson. 'Holly Mac' carries dark green foliage with medium spreading growth habit. We have noticed that this plant throws some unusually large leaves which will catch your eye.

### 'Roman Soldier'

We are beginning to see a few flowers of a very beautiful seedling that Mr. Hugh Shackelford of Albany, Georgia has named 'Roman Soldier'. A seedling brick red in color and very thick and frilly peony in form. Flower size from our plants has averaged around 4½ inches but it is reported to attain 5 inches in diameter. A mid-season bloomer with nice foliage. Mrs. Gish and I first saw this plant in Mr. Shackelford's garden

when it was listed as #315 and it was his thought at this time to name it Sir Gallahad. Later he learned this name had been used so he selected and registered this beautiful flower under the name of 'Roman Soldier'.

## FERTILIZING (Continued)

size of the plant and its general condition.

### Z

Zealous effort only will enable you to have the best in show flowers.

### A

All factors of growth and blooming are interrelated and sometimes one finds that the addition of fertilizers is not always the answer to the best plant growth and best flowers.

### T

The most commonly used method is the application of either dry acid type, longer lasting fertilizer or a weak solution of a general purpose liquid fertilizer. Either is simple, direct, and effective. Some growers alternate the methods for excellent results.

### I

If you have properly planted the camellia plant it should be sometime before it needs fertilizer.

### O

Optimum growth of a camellia plant depends on all the many and different components of the environment, both atmospheric and soil. While feeding is generally beneficial, there are times when you should not use a commercial fertilizer. Never fertilize a camellia after you transplant it. Wait a year before feeding it. Another general rule to remember is to keep from feeding a sick plant. What might look like a good idea may be just what will kill the plant.

### N

Nothing in the entire culture of camellias is more rewarding than the perfect bloom. Nothing is more controversial than the question of fertilization.

## T. S. Clower Writes About Grafting

T. S. Clower, one of *the* names in camellia lore, writes us that the articles on grafting in the January 1961 issue of CAMELLIA REVIEW, were most interesting, informative and reassuring. He says, "I am an old camellia hobbyist, having been hobbying with camellias over fifty years and, of course, started with old methods. My grafting has been successful, though clumsy, and just plain hard work. I have grafted dozens of plants in our garden from three to six feet above ground using as many as thirty scions on them. This was done by the old method of scaffolding a box of soil and proceeding as on the ground.

"The 're-assuring' feature to me is that I am now preparing to graft a 'Betty Sheffield Supreme' with thirty scions on a plant and these scions will be placed approximately six feet above ground and I do not want to lose them. Your articles and my local observation of the "Polyethelene Bag In Grafting" method has finally convinced me that I am safe in changing from the "Good Old Method"."

---

## About Moving Camellia Collections

Mrs. Alice Tinkham told in the January 1961 CAMELLIA REVIEW how she moved her camellia collection in Southern California. Mrs. Ragusa of Metairie, Louisiana tells us that she moved over two hundred camellia plants from Lake Charles, Louisiana in October. Some were over seven feet tall. So far she has lost only two plants, and all are in full sun. She is planting castor beans to shade them next summer. It looks as though camellias are not as tender as some people thought they were back in the days when they hesitated to pick six inches of stem with the bloom.

## Pomona Society

The Pomona Society's February 8th meeting was a festive occasion highlighted by a dinner at the Claremont Inn in Claremont. Among the guests attending were Mr. and Mrs. H. Jack Clark of Auckland, New Zealand and Mr. Keith Brushfield of Sidney, Australia. Blooms selected for ribbons in the over 4 inches class were 'Kramer's Supreme', 'Mamie', 'Melody Lane', and 'Chiro Chan'. Blooms selected for ribbons in the under 4 inches class were 'Dr. Tinsley', 'Alison Leigh Woodroof', 'Debutante' and 'Prince Eugene Napoleon'. Pictures were taken by Jack McCaskill of the trophy winners of the Pomona Society show held on February 4th and 5th.

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Quote from the "Carolina Camellia Bulletin": As for ourselves, we have reached the point where we had rather have a duplicate plant of a variety that we particularly like than to have a plant of something we don't especially like just because it is new or a little different.

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We like to receive bouquets such as the following from South Carolina: "Without the wonderful S. C. C. S. Camellia Review I feel we would be far behind in new methods of grafting, etc. Each issue is indeed more interesting than the last one. Your society deserves a lot of credit." We also like to receive criticism when someone has an idea for improvement.

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# HYBRIDS? GROUND RULES FOR EDWARDS METCALF HYBRID TROPHY

By R. F. Dickson, Sr.

Chairman, Hertrich Awards Committee

Since the announcement of the Edwards Metcalf Hybrid Trophy, (see may 1960 CAMELLIA REVIEW, page 12), some of our members have asked your awards committee "just what are you going to consider a hybrid camellia?" Instead of using the dictionary as our guide, we asked the donor of the trophy to tell us what he wished used to determine the eligibility of flowers to compete for this trophy. The following is quoted from his reply dated February 3, 1961.

"I feel that we should consider that a hybrid camellia is one that has come about by the cross pollination of two or more different *species* of Genus *Camellia*. The resultant seedling will nearly always have characteristics of both species, however one specie characteristic may be more predominant than the other, and often is such as in the case of *saluenensis* crosses, such as 'Donation' and 'Citation'.

"There has been some thought that we should require a chromosome count before any award is made. I feel at this time that this is unnecessary and impractical, but later it may be necessary. However, even the chromosome count in the crossing of certain of the camellia species would not give you a proof positive answer.

"True hybridizing is a scientific fact and result, but let us all enjoy camellias and the results of hybridizing. It will be from hybridizing that many fine flowers of the future will come. The requirements for a winner of the Edwards Metcalf Hybrid Award can not be anything but a superior flower due to the scoring requirements. Let us have the qualified judges pick the flowers in contest,

and if the rules are found lacking let us change them then and then only.

"There are many hybrids that are well known and popular today, such as:

J. C. Williams group, known as Williamsii  
Phyll Doak, Brian Doak, Leslie, and others of the Doak group  
David Feathers group

Suggested crosses might be:

Reticulata x Japonica  
Saluenensis x Reticulata  
Saluenensis x Japonica  
Reticulata x Sasanqua  
Reticulata x Granthamiana  
Japonica x Granthamiana  
etc.

Further reference should be made to "Camellia Culture," Chapter IX."

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It's hard for us in Southern California, who have had no winter and so little moisture through the whole month of February that the blooms are not all "bursting out" as they should, to realize what cold weather has done in the Southeast part of the United States. From Alabama: "We have had a very bad winter so far, cold, and flowers are late. Shows cancelled. We have 31 this morning and they say will be that cold or colder in the morning. That doesn't make for good flowers." From Georgia: "We have had to cancel our show. Have had two months of real cold weather. However, hope to have a small show in March." (This is for the benefit of the poor people of Southern California who have been griping because the dryness of the air has caused their blooms not to blow up like pumpkins).

# INSECT DAMAGE TO CAMELLIAS

By Mark Anthony

Asst. Supt., Descanso Gardens

Camellias in Southern California are a group of plants that get by with a minimum of insect damage. If this were not the case, we at Descanso Gardens would surely have our hands full with one hundred thousand camellia plants to care for.

Our biggest problem has been in keeping the oak leaf roller from eating the young leaf buds of our reticulatas. The leaf rollers slide down their fine thread-like webs from the oaks above and work their way into the center of the reticulata growth buds just as they are starting to elongate. After they are inside the bud no amount of spraying seems to do any good. The best control is had by spraying all the oak trees in the vicinity with Dieldrin spray as soon as the first leaf roller appears in the oaks. If this does not kill all the leaf rollers a second spraying may be necessary.

For years scale insects gave camellia growers a lot of trouble but since Colorado river water came to Southern California, most of the scale disappeared as they could not stand the thin coating of salt on their shell every time the camellia plant was washed off. For those who do find a few scale on their plants, a 2% oil spray in the spring when the young scale are in a migratory stage will kill them. Never spray with oil when the temperature is over 85° and always have the soil around the plants good and wet before spraying.

Sometimes the margins of camellia leaves look as if they had been pinked with shears. This is most likely the work of the Fuller's Rose Beetle. He is easily killed by dusting the soil underneath the plant and in the surrounding areas with Dieldrin or Aldrin dust. This will also kill other

beetles that sometimes eat holes in the ends of camellia buds.

In May and June when camellias are in active growth, aphid will sometimes attack the new shoots. The damage they do is not great but they are liable to disfigure some of the leaves by taking the sap from the leaves. Wash them off with water or better still spray them with Malathion or Nicotine Sulfate. Ants will bring aphid to your camellias so keep the ants away with a little Chlordane dusted around the plants.

Keep D.D.T. sprays away from your camellias. In spraying our oak trees a few years ago D.D.T. was used with damaging results. Many single varieties were killed outright. 'Pink Perfections' lost about two-thirds of their leaves and buds but most of them survived. Camellia 'Betty McCaskill' was also killed outright. The camellias themselves were not sprayed but were damaged by the drip from the oak trees.

I have seen slugs crawl up camellia plants and eat holes in the flower itself. Slug bait under the plant will kill them.

As I said at the beginning of this article, camellias have very few insect problems and if you keep your plants washed off and clean at all times, they will have even less trouble.

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## Gibberellic Acid

In setting up Frank Reed's article in last month's CAMELLIA REVIEW, "Early Blooms and Gibberellic Acid," we mistook 2 - 3 for  $\frac{2}{3}$  rather than for 2 to 3. So will you please turn to page 20, second paragraph, 4th line of the February 1961 issue and change your copy, particularly if there is any chance that you will want to experiment with gibberellin.

# DR. LEE CHOW OF BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA TALKS ABOUT RETICULATAS AT FEBRUARY S. C. C. S. MEETING

By R. F. Dickson, Sr.

At the February 14th meeting of the S. C. C. S., Dr. Lee Chow of Bakersfield, Calif. gave a report on reticulatas based upon material that he and his very talented wife Arlene had prepared from their translations of a book written by Drs. Yee and Fung. This book was printed in Peking during 1958 for the authors who are scientists at the Botanical Experimental Station in Kunming, capital of Yunnan Province.

That reticulatas are not modern is proven by the fact that the authors mention a nomenclature book written 500 years ago which listed 72 varieties. This book is now lost. The authors find, now growing, 20 varieties on which they report.

At the present time the plants are grown mostly in the Buddhist monasteries, which at first thought seems odd since the lotus is the flower of

*(Continued on next page)*

## DESCANSO GARDENS COMING EVENTS

MARCH AND APRIL, 1961

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| All of March | Art Exhibit — Painters and Sculptors Club of Los Angeles, in Hospitality House.  |
| All of March | Camellias in bloom.  |
| All of March | Azaleas in bloom.  |
| All of March | Daffodils in bloom.  |
| March 2nd    | Lecture, "California Trees," sponsored by California Native Plant Committee, in Garden House at 8:00 p.m.  |
| March 7th    | Arbor Day Program — 3:45 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. Sponsored by California Native Plant Committee, San Gabriel Council of Boy Scouts of America, and Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens. |
| March 11-12  | Camellia Show — Sponsored by Los Angeles Camellia Council, Ltd.  |
| March 12th   | Bird Walk, 8:00 a.m. Sponsored by San Fernando Valley Audubon Society.   |
| March 18-19  | Daffodil Show — Sponsored by American Daffodil Society, Descanso Gardens Guild, Inc., and Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens.  |
| March 26th   | Bird Walk, 8:00 a.m. Sponsored by San Fernando Valley Audubon Society.   |
| All of April | Art Exhibit — Ruby Andresen (one man show), in Hospitality House.  |
| All of April | Azaleas in bloom.  |
| All of April | Cymbidium orchids in bloom.  |
| All of April | Roses and Iris in bloom.   |
| April 9th    | Bird Walk, 8:00 a.m. Sponsored by San Fernando Valley Audubon Society.   |
| April 23rd   | Bird Walk, 8:00 a.m. Sponsored by San Fernando Valley Audubon Society.   |

the Buddhists. When one learns that oil produced from the retic seed is used for hair dressing, because of its substance and delicate aroma, and is also used for cooking, you see them as a source of income.

Before reporting any of the growing data we want here to mention two conspicuous retic trees spoken of by Dr. Chow. First, a 'Tali Queen' of unknown age, but known to have been growing during the Ming dynasty. The height and size of its trunk were not mentioned but the tree cascades over an area of  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre. Second, a tree of 'Pagoda' known to be 60 years old and is 40 feet tall.

To understand why we in our country have problems in growing good retics, let's look at the climate where they originated and the methods used there. In Yunnan they are cultivated at altitudes up to 6000 feet. They do get frost but no freezing weather. The rainfall is in the order of 17 to 18 inches annually, mostly during their summer months. Also because of climatic conditions there is much dew at night.

At the monasteries where they are grown by monks trained for the task, they are not shade grown. They get sun up to just past mid-day and are shaded from afternoon sun. It was pointed out that the entire operation is carried out by the monks who propagate, graft, fertilize, gather the ripe seeds and sell both seed and plants. And though the lotus is their flower, they use retics in decorations, or perhaps in our language, arrangements.

Here are the factors of reticulata care as outlined by Dr. Chow. He illustrated pot culture by showing several pages of his book with an opaque projector. The pots were of heavy clay. They are used for two reasons. Metal containers are too costly over there and wood does not last. Here is what your reporter thinks may be, though to them incidental, the real key to their culture.

They call it the percussion method for watering. The idea is to tap or thump the pot and by the sound given off a trained ear can tell whether the soil is wet or dry. No watering is done until the dry note is heard. I am asking myself, "do I water mine too much?"

Fertilizing begins when the plant is being potted. A little soil goes into the pot, then a layer of hoof and horn in walnut size pieces. Then a little more soil and a layer of smaller pieces of hoof and horn, then soil upon which the plant is placed. The potting is finished with soil and a small amount of bone meal. For the fertilizing of established plants, urea and manure, obtained both from human and animal sources, are used. No mention was made of any chemical fertilizer such as supplied by our nurseries.

When grafting retics 'Alba Plena' root stock is used. They use both air-layering and approach methods but not cleft grafting. All of their transplanting is said to be done in June and July.

In closing his talk Dr. Chow projected several more pages of the book showing in color several very fine blooms. The last one was a yellow flower, so called by them. It was not yellow by our standards, neither was it white or ivory. It was, however, a "teaser" and something to be further investigated if and when we may again freely travel the Chinese mainland.

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**Hybrid seed are sold out, says Mrs. Mildred Pitkin, SCCS secretary.**

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# WORK IS NEEDED TO EXPLORE WIDER AREA FOR CAMELLIA CULTURE

Frederic Heutte

Supt., Bureau of Parks  
Norfolk, Virginia

When visiting large nurseries specializing in the growing of camellias, as there exists in the Southeast and Southwest United States, you begin to wonder where all of these plants can be planted, until you take a trip such as I did across the country in which the Southern edge of Zone 7 and the entire width of Zone 8 was followed and where little and in most cases no evidence of this genus is to be found.

Temperature zones are not the criteria, of course, in the growing of camellias as many other factors are involved, nevertheless it is an index of the potentials over which they can be spotted. It has taken in most part individuals who have pioneered in their introduction in certain sections of America, but this is a slow process of saturation. I am speaking especially of localities where temperatures occasionally dip to zero. I recall visiting some years ago the home of Mrs. Clarence Sample of St. James, Long Island, New York, who took her cue from the late Dr. P. W. Zimmerman of Yonkers, N.Y., the place that perhaps has recorded the lowest temperature where some camellias have survived temperatures 20 degrees below Zero. Mrs. Sample says in her recent article in the A.C.S. yearbook that 200 varieties now grow in Long Island, where temperatures do drop to zero and even several degrees below.

In the mountains of Virginia, in the vicinity of Roanoke, camellias have been grown there for over fifteen years and temperatures quite often dip to below zero. Mrs. C. M. Gooch of Memphis, Tennessee has also pioneered in their introduction there and now many are growing them, but

at best this is a slow process of spreading camellia lore throughout its potentials.

The purpose of this article is to point out that in such cities formerly thought to be on the northern fringe of camellia growth and where the Park department has taken a hand in their introduction, the response has been overwhelming and soon seen growing in most every back yard because the name itself has always been magic but on the mystic side and not as tough a plant as we know it to be. Norfolk's Park Department started the spread of camellias 20 years ago. But it was really the National Arboretum under Drs. Henry T. Skinner and Francis de Vos which exemplified their true worth and stamina, and from there gradually spreading the camellia fervor in the North. To see them grow on the slopes of the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. is really a feast to the camellia fancier's eye, and under the scientific scrutiny of such able men there, and others of the Camellia Research Advisory Committee there is no telling where camellias can be grown.

I would like to see Park departments apprised of their potentials along the routes I followed on my 6500 miles journey, and I hope that sufficient support is given the Camellia Research Advisory Committee under the able direction of Mr. E. C. Tourje to explore these areas by submitting to them questionnaires as to their interest. I feel certain that our leading nursery men would be willing to supply at cost, plants to supply experimental plots. For instance, in visiting the wonderful Park Department of Fort Worth, Texas I found



a couple of sasanquas . . . nobody there was excited about camellias because of their questionable hardiness.

Our City Park Department is willing to share with other Parks, plants for test, because we know what camellias have done to rouse horticulture interest among our citizens . . . as the result our local nurseries have a job keeping up with the demand. Perhaps the first mode of approach is to present this plant, not as a tender and hard to grow specimen but as a rugged and long lasting representative of the plant world, providing some very simple conditions are met, such conditions not being the purpose of this article. Rather, it is to urge more of us to share and spread the lore of this wonderful genus and thus help create a more beautiful America.

**GROWING RETICS** (Continued)  
cans were especially nice looking. Blooming size were in egg cans and while none of the blooms that I saw

were very different from varieties now on the market some of them looked much, much too nice to discard. These they will probably grow for a few years before deciding whether or not to put them on the market. It seems safe to predict that among these 2000 seedlings there will be at least a few that will be on the show tables in a few years.

While this article has concerned only *reticulatas* it should be remembered that the Nuccio Nursery contains one of the finest collections of Japonicas and Sasanquas in the United States. Talking to Joe and Julius and wandering through their fine nursery was a very pleasant and enlightening experience.

Overheard at a camellia show: 1st disgruntled exhibitor, "Old judges never die, they just fade away." 2nd disgruntled exhibitor, "No, they don't just fade away, they just get petal blight."

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- Camellia Society of Kern County.....Bakersfield  
 President: Tom Stull; Secretary: Mrs. Frank B. Anderson, P.O. Box 183, Bakersfield.  
 Meetings held 2nd Wednesday of the month, October through April, at Cuning-  
 ham Memorial Art Gallery, 1930 R St., Bakersfield.
- Camellia Society of Orange County.....Santa Ana  
 President: Ken Newerf; Secretary: Mrs. George T. Butler, 1121 Orange, Santa Ana.  
 Meetings held second Thursday of the month, October through April, in Spurgeon  
 Memorial Room of New Santa Ana Public Library.
- Central California Camellia Society.....Fresno  
 President: Rey Merino; Secretary: Mrs. Karen Lee Aherns, 1144-E Saginaw Way,  
 Fresno.  
 Meetings held 2nd Wednesday of each month, November through March, except  
 March meeting which is held on 4th Wednesday, at Heaton School, Del Mar Ave.,  
 Fresno.
- Huntington Camellia Garden.....San Marino  
 Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, Oxford Road, San Marino.
- Pomona Valley Camellia Society.....Pomona  
 President: Walter H. Harmsen; Secretary: Mrs. Kyle H. Bottoms, 5913 Riverside  
 Drive, Chino.  
 Meetings held 2nd Thursday of each month, November through April, at Clare-  
 mont Women's Club, 345 W. 12th, Claremont.
- San Diego Camellia Society.....San Diego  
 President: Clive Pillsbury; Secretary: Mrs. Ferris H. Jones, 4545 Dana Drive, La Mesa.  
 Meetings held 2nd Friday of the month, November through May, in Floral Associ-  
 ation Building, Balboa Park, San Diego.
- Temple City Camellia Society.....Temple City  
 President: Peter P. Folino; Secretary: Mrs. Peter Folino, 708 W. Pepper Glen Dr.,  
 Arcadia.  
 Meetings held 4th Monday of the month, October through April, at Women's Club  
 Auditorium, Woodruff at Kaufman, Temple City.
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