

THE
Camellia
REVIEW





Front Cover: 'Grande Prix'
Photo Credit: Bradford King

Inside Cover: 'Island Sunset'
Photo Credit: Bradford King

Published by the Southern California Camellia Society • socialcamelliasociety.org
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THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

CHANGE IS IN THE AIR

BY BRADFORD KING

Early July in 2018 was brutally hot with temperatures well over 100 in Southern California which damaged many plants including scorching camellia foliage. What a wonderful change in 2019. We enjoyed a cool rainy spring. July temperatures were in the mid-80's with a series of earthquakes that shook things up. However, plants were not negatively affected. This summer the camellia pods were the best in years due to the cool mist spring and moderate summer temperatures. Fall was sunny and cool for California which made the



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C. sasanqua cultivars bloom later than their usually peak in November. The camellia show season began in January with beautiful gibed camellias taking center stage and ushering in natural beauties through the winter months of 2020.

We apologize that there was no fall *Camellia Review* in 2019. The volunteer production editor was unable to complete the issue. Therefore, we have engaged a graphic designer, Michell Glush to do the 2020 publications.

The article “California Winners” by Don Bergamini tally’s the top 2019 camellia show winning camellia blooms. If you are looking to add to your camellia collection, this provides a great list to work from.

Two thousand and twenty was the eighth-year anniversary for the Southern California Camellia Society. Enjoy the article about the Anniversary Celebration.

The feature article California’s Camellia Triple Crown highlights Descanso Gardens, The Huntington Botanical gardens and Nuccio’s Nurseries. They are world class and have visitors from around the globe. Those of us who live in Southern California

can visit them any time of the year. However, for camellia lovers’ winter when camellias are in bloom is “The Best”. The cover photos are a sample of what you can see.... Nuccio’s Nurseries has introduced over 200 new camellias and propagates over 500 camellia varieties is represented by ‘Grand Prix’ our cover flower and ‘Island Sunset’ on the inside cover. Rudy’s ‘Magnoliaeflora’ was introduced by ‘The Huntington’ where



‘KANJIRO’ HEDGE AT THE HUNTINGTON

the photo was taken this January. ‘Hiryu’ with a mass of blooms was taken in Descanso Gardens is the back-cover bloom.

2019 CALIFORNIA WINNERS

A MAGNIFICENT SEASON

BY DON BERGAMINI

Well, here are the winners for 2019. I think the weather had a lot to do with the winners this year. Some of the big winners from the past were still big winners this year, such as Frank Houser and Tama Peacock. You will notice that the wins were more spread out among the cultivars. There were some new ones to land on the trophy table such as Bella Jinhua, Kaleidoscope, and Lundy's Legacy.

In the multiple classes, Freedom Bell, Red Hots, Tama Peacock, Frank Houser and Frank Houser Var. dominated. Take a look at the results and be surprised at some of the findings.



SINGLES

JAPONICA Lg/VLg

Carter's Sunburst.....	4
Elegans Splendor.....	4
Ferris Wheel.....	4
Julius Nuccio.....	3
Miss Charleston Var	3
Veiled Beauty.....	3
Junior Prom.....	2
Lady Laura.....	2
Moonlight Bay.....	2
Showtime.....	2
16 others with 1 win each	

JAPONICA MED

Margaret Davis.....	4
Bella Jinhua.....	3
Betty's Beauty	3
Astronaut.....	2
Betty Sheffield Supreme ..	2
Black Magic.....	2
Elaine's Betty Pink Var ..	2
Chie Taramoto.....	2
Happy Harlequin.....	2
Kaleidoscope.....	2
Magnoliaeflora	2
Nuccio's Carousel.....	2
Princess Masako	2
17 others with 1 win each	

SMALL (ANY SPECIES)

Tama Peacock.....	6
Hishi-Karaito.....	4
Freedom Bell.....	3
Red Devil.....	3
Dahlohnega.....	2
Red Hots.....	2
Spring Daze.....	2
15 others with 1 win each	

MINIATURE (ANY SPECIES)

Fukurin Ikkyu.....	3
Grace Albritton.....	3
Tama Bambino.....	3
Chris Bergamini.....	2
Kewpie Doll.....	2
Little Michael.....	2
Man Size.....	2
Night Rider	2
Paper Dolls.....	2

Something Beautiful.....	2
Sue Kendall Var	2
8 others with 1 win each	

RETIC AND RETIC HYBRIDS

Frank Houser	8
Barbara Goff.....	5
Terrell Weaver	5
Holy Pure.....	4
Valentine Day.....	4
Moonrise.....	3
Valley Knudsen.....	3
Bravo.....	2
Crinoline	2
Curtain Call.....	2
Frank Houser Var.....	2
Tango	2
12 others with 1 win each	

NON-RETICULATA HYBRIDS

Island Sunset	6
Angel Wings.....	4
Senritsu Ko	3
Waltz Time Var.....	3
Coral Delight	2
Garden Glory	2
Hot Stuff.....	2
Julie Var	2
Lucky Star	2
Ms Mo.....	2
Nicky Crisp	2
Pink Dahlia	2
11 others with 1 win each	

SPECIES

Egao	4
Shishi Gashira.....	3
7 others with 1 win each	

MULTIPLES

JAPONICAS

Nuccio's Bella Rossa.....	4
Nuccio's Carousel.....	4
Royal Velvet	4
Dixie Knight Supreme ..	3
Julius Nuccio	3
Magnoliaeflora	3
Mathotiana.....	3

Miss Charleston Var	3
Ragland Supreme	3
Rudy's Magnoliaeflora ...	3
Atomic Red.....	2
Elegans Splendor.....	2
Ferris Wheel	2
Flash Dance	2
Haru-No-Utena.....	2
Prima Ballerina.....	2
Purity.....	2
Tata.....	2
Tiffany.....	2
19 others with 1 win each	

BOUTONNIERES

Freedom Bell	8
Red Hots	8
Tama Peacock	7
Man Size	4
Flynn Sans.....	3
Hishi-Karaito.....	3
Dahlohnega.....	2
Pink Perfection	2
Red Devil.....	2
Something Beautiful.....	2
Takanini	2
10 others with 1 win each	

RETICULATA & RETICULATA HYBRIDS

Frank Houser	7
Frank Houser Var.....	5
Crimson Candles	4
Terrell Weaver	3
Miss Tulare.....	2
5 others with 1 win each	

NON-RETICULATA HYBRIDS

Demure	4
Lucky Star	4
Minato-No-Akebono	3
Waltz Time Var.....	3
Taylor's Perfection	3
Tulip Time	2
9 others with 1 win each	

SPECIES

Egao	3
Shishi Gashira.....	2
Shiro Karako.....	1



‘MINATO-NO AKEBONO’



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S

CAMELLIA TRIPLE CROWN

BY BRADFORD KING

The Triple Crown of Thoroughbred Racing comprises three races for three-year-old thoroughbred horses. The three races are the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and The Belmont. It is an outstanding achievement for a horse to win the triple crown. Since 1919, there have only been thirteen horses to win that crown. In 2018 Justify won the Santa Anita Derby in Arcadia to become eligible to enter the Kentucky Derby. Justify won the Derby in the rain and mud then held off all comers to win the Preakness and led from start to finish to win the Triple Crown by winning the Belmont on June 9, 2018.

THE CAMELLIA TRIPLE CROWN

The Southern California Camellia Triple Crown is comprised of The Huntington Botanical Gardens which began in 1903 with just two cultivars;



'HENRY E. HUNTINGTON'

Descanso Gardens when Manchester Boddy bought 165 acres for a ranch and a home for his family in 1935; and Nuccio's Nurseries in 1935 when Joe and Julius Nuccio began propagating and selling camellias from their parents' back yard.

THE HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

The camellia collection was begun in 1908 when twenty-four plants were purchased from a local nursery. William Hertrick, curator, began growing camellias from seed in 1912 to serve as under stock to graft new cultivars to be used in the camellia collection. He published the results of his propagation studies of thousands of camellias in his three volume *Camellias in the Huntington*. In 1913 the Japanese garden was developed including the planting of camellias. In 1918 a small shipment of camellias was imported from Japan. In 1944 the Southern California Camellia Society and the Friends of the Huntington Library planned for the camellia to become a distinctive feature of the Huntington Botanical Gardens. The two main camellia sec-

tions are The North Vista and The North Canyon Camellia Garden. Camellia species and new introductions continued to be added through the years. Howard Asper, when he became superintendent of the gardens, made plans to plant masses of *C. sasanqua* which are now mature flowering small trees across from the Chinese and Japanese Garden. Camellias and azaleas were included in the landscaping of the Chinese Garden which opened in 2008. In 2015 a new path was constructed behind the *C. sasanqua* camellias which features camellias from Nuccio's.

In 2017 a dozen *C. reticulata* were added to augment the original Yunnan Camellias imported by Ralph Peer in 1948. The Huntington west entrance has new plantings of both camellia species and camellias along with trees. Today, with The Huntington Botanical Gardens stretches over 120 acres in San Marino, and the camellia collection has grown to 14,000 cultivars and 60 camellia species. In 2001 the International Camellia Society recognized The Huntington Gardens as an International Camellia Garden for its rich camellia collection and reaccredited them in 2012.

The Scott Gallery landscaping is a wonderful example of a creative and practical use of camellias. The loge has a collection of nine fragrant 'Minato

'MINATO-NO AKEBONO'





'KANJIRO'

no Akebono' among statues of dogs. The Scott north entrance pathway has 'Kanjiro' hedges on both sides that look good all year long and are beautiful in the fall and early winter when in full bloom.

DESCANSO GARDENS

In 1935 Manchester Boddy purchased 125 acres of land in La Canada where he raised cattle and began planting camellias with the intention of developing them for the cut flower industry. By 1941 he had amassed a collection of 600 camellias. He and his family lived in a 22-room mansion built in the then popular Regency style. As the camellia collection continued to expand, Boddy hired Howard Asper, a camellia specialist, as curator and chief propagator. Together they developed a commercial camellia plantation to serve the cut flower industry. Camellias became the flower of choice as corsages for the well-dressed ladies of the time. Boddy added thousands of camellias to his inventory during the forced relocation of Japanese Americans to internment camps during World War II. He purchased the inventory of two Japanese owned camellia growers when they were forced into the camps. J.W. Uyematsu owned and operated Star Nurseries, which was the largest

and most successful in California. F. W. Yoshimura owned Mission Nursery which continues today as San Gabriel Nursery.

Howard Asper supervised the planting of many of these camellias beneath the oaks of 'Rancho del Descanso'. He grafted dozens of varieties onto 'Eureka' rootstock to enlarge the camellia plantation that served their cut flower business. In 1945 Dr. Walter Lammerts joined Boddy and Asper at Descanso. They admired the giant flowers of *C. reticulata*. They envisioned hybridizing with them but none were available outside of China. Dr. Lammerts identified a Chinese botanist in the Yunnan Providence of China. In early 1948, Professor T. Tsai, a botanist at Kunming Institute, wrote that 20 different cultivars of *reticulata* were available. These 20 varieties were shipped to San Francisco with 15 surviving. Some were lost with additional plants and scions imported by Descanso and Ralph Peer. This was a major contribution to the western camellia world.

In 1950 Boddy opened his estate, now named "Descanso Gardens," to the public. In 1952 he decided to retire, sell his ranch and move to San

'BUTTONS' N BOWS'



Diego County. Concerned by the prospect of development, neighbors approached the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors with the idea that the County purchase the property, keeping it intact and in the public trust. In 1953 Descanso Gardens went from private estate to public garden.

The Descanso Garden camellia icon is 'Bernice Boddy' named for Mrs. Manchester Boddy. The flower is a lovely medium semidouble light pink with deeper pink under the petals. The plant grows vigorously in an upright spreading manner and is very cold hardy. It has been field tested over a forty-year period in the Washington and Baltimore metropolitan area. Dr. Clifford Parks April Series of 10 cold hardy cultivars used 'Bernice Boddy' as the seed parent for six of them. This cold hardy trait is what makes this pretty flower so important. It was one of the plants Boddy bought from Star Nursery who imported it from Japan.

The 30,000 camellia plants in Descanso Gardens make it one of the largest collections in America. The camellias are in a California native habitat growing under a canopy of Coastal Live Oaks. In 2001 the International Camellia Society recognized Descanso Gardens as an International Camellia Garden and reevaluated the garden in 2011 granting them continued recognition as an International Camellia Garden of Excellence in February 2012.

NUCCIO'S NURSERIES

The nursery began when Joe and Julius Nuccio began to grow camellias and azaleas in their parents' backyard in Alhambra, California in the 1930's. The two brothers began to propagate camellias and azaleas which led them to grow seedlings hoping to produce new cultivars. When Julius went into the Army at the beginning of World War II, Joe built a lath house at his home in Santa Monica to house all their stock plants. Joe worked during the war as a shipwright. When Julius returned from the war, the two brothers moved the nursery business to Altadena, California which is the present location. New camellia cultivars have been introduced since 1950 when the founding fathers introduced a rose pink medium rose form double for their mother, Katherine Nuccio. Joe and Julius honored their father by naming a large to very large coral rose red semidouble flower with irregular petals that stand up like rabbit ears 'Guilio Nuccio.'

When the co-owners retired, the Nursery passed to the second genera-

tion to be run by Joe's son Jude and Julius's two sons Tom and Jim. Today, it is managed by Tom and Jim since Jude retired. One of the very best new registrations is 'Julius Nuccio.' The flower is a very large beautiful dark red semidouble with two rows of long pointed petals, with one row superimposed over the other, that stand out from each other. It was introduced in 2014 to commemorate the 97year old surviving founder of the nursery who subsequently passed away. Julius really didn't want any camellia named for himself, but the "boys" overruled him. Nuccio's claims there will be no new camellia introductions bearing the family name.

Nuccio's Nurseries has introduced 209 camellias from 1950 to 2018 which include sports and variegated cultivars. The American Camellia Society (ACS) provides awards to outstanding camellias each year. The Illges Seedling Japonica Award is given to the originator of a seedling, not a sport or mutation, each year since 1945. Nuccio's Nurseries has won this prestigious award thirteen times. These award-winning cultivars are still popular and widely distributed as they are some of the best camellia available today.

'JULIUS NUCCIO'





'BLAC OPAL'



'PINK DAHLIA'



'NIGHT RIDER'

COLORFUL CAMELLIA NAMES

BY BRADFORD KING

Several camellias have used the flower color as a part of their name. Others have been named based on a key characteristic such as their petal shape. A name that accurately describes a flower is a good marketing strategy. Colorful camellia names are interesting and vivid reminders of the bloom. Let's look at some examples.

'Black Opal' is an especially rare and valuable gemstone. Pure opal is colorless with impurities generally responsible for the yellow and red hues. The opal is the month of October's gemstone. The finest opals have been found in Australia and New Zealand. Therefore, it is not surprising that Oz Blumhardt, a hybridizer from New Zealand, named a black red hybrid camellia 'Black Opal'. The small to medium semidouble flower is a seedling of 'Ruby Bell' and 'Kuro Tsubaki'. It is rarely seen in America just like the black opal. We do see 'Night Rider' which is the same cross made by the same breeder. It has a miniature to small semidouble very dark red flower. They both have colorful names. Can you spot their differences?

Dahlia is a genus of bushy, tuberous, herbaceous perennial plants native to Mexico, Central America, and Colombia. There are at least 36 species of dahlia with hybrids coming in a variety of colors and some with a mix of colors. Flower forms are variable, with one head per stem; these can be as small as 2 inches and up to a foot in diameter frequently referred to as "dinner plate dahlias." The camellia '**Pink Dahlia**' looks like a typical formal double dahlia, hence its name. This saluenensis miniature to small flower is orchid pink with slender pointed petals. '**Pink Dahlia Variegated**' has a strikingly beautiful flower. They were both developed by Kramer Brothers Nursery, Cucamonga, California. Otto and August Kramer grew potted plants, cut flowers and were known for their azaleas, camellias and gardenias. Ben Mackall



'PURPLE GOWN'



'CRIMSON ROBE'



'GRAPE SODA'

married August Kramer's daughter Marie in 1937. After August died, Ben and Marie managed the nursery until 1986 when the nursery closed and the land was sold.

A **gown** is an elegant, woman's full-length dress for special occasions or a long **robe** often dark in color worn on special occasions by judges, professors and university students. Language is fun, tricky and interesting. For example, a gown can be an elegant woman's dress or a robe but a robe is never a woman's formal dress. If she were wearing a robe, it would most likely be to cover sleep wear to provide warmth and privacy. A physician can't wear a robe to the office but frequently wears a gown to cover his clothes to maintain sanitary conditions while seeing patients. There are two wonderful *C. reticulata* cultivars whose names are **'Purple Gown'** and **'Crimson Robe'**. They are elegantly dressed in purple red and crimson.

Candles have been used to illuminate human celebrations for more than 5,000 years. However, their origin is unclear. The ancient Egyptians may have developed the first candles when they used torches made by soaking the pithy core of reeds soaked in animal fat, but these torches had no wick as do true candles. It is known that the Egyptians used



'CRIMSON CANDLES'



'CORAL BOUQUET'

wicked candles in 3,000 B.C. The ancient Romans are credited with developing the wicked candle when papyrus was rolled and dipped in melted tallow or beeswax. These candles were used to light homes, for traveling at night and in religious ceremonies. Dr. Clifford Parks, known for breeding cold hardy, fragrant and *reticulata* hybrid camellias, introduced **'Crimson Candles'** a *C. reticulata* X *C. fraterna* seedling in 1955. The flower is a bright rose red, small single late season bloomer that is cold hardy. It looks best on the bush in full bloom when the multiple buds look like a candle arbor.

When candles and a lovely bouquet of flowers decorate a dinner party, it is celebration time. The Nuccio's celebrated their introduction of **'Coral Bouquet'** with its rich coral pink medium to large single flower that is toned lighter in the center with wavy petals. Camellia enthusiasts celebrate these hybrids because of the wonderful new color tones.

Another color breakthrough is the japonica hybrid **'Grape Soda'**. The small to medium single flower has unique lavender to lavender red petals that tend toward purple. The name and color conjure up the image of drinking grape soda from a bottle in hot summer weather. In Boston these soft drinks were called "Tonic." The word may refer to tonic water, a drink traditionally containing quinine; soft drink, a carbonated beverage; tonic (physiological), the response of a muscle fiber or nerve ending typified by slow continuous action; Herbal tonic a herbal medicine with tonic effects; Tonic (music) a concept of musical theory and even an American rock band.

Language and camellia names are frequently beautiful and colorful!



'BUTTERFLY WINGS'



'CHANG'S TEMPLE'



'CORNELIAN'

THE HUNTINGTON
CAMELLIA RETICULATA
COLLECTION

BY BRADFORD KING

The Yunnan *C. reticulata* first came to Descanso Gardens from China in 1948. A second importation was received by Ralph Peer. This began the propagation of these camellias with large and very large beautiful flowers in America. Ralph Peer and Descanso Gardens generously shared plants with The Huntington. At the Huntington they can be found in the North Vista in an area labeled “Reticulata Knoll.” Examples of these original camellias are clearly labeled and can be found in bloom usually in February and March. Some of the original specimens have survived. Recently the Huntington has augmented the collection with several new plants of the original imports which makes this the most comprehensive collection of the Yunnan *C. reticulata* in Southern California.

‘Butterfly Wings’ (‘Houye Diechi’) has a rose pink very large semidouble flower with irregular broad wavy petals that resemble a butterfly’s wings. The Chinese frequently describe a semidouble *reticulata* flower with multiple upright petals as a semidouble butterfly wing type bloom.

Since it is common for Chinese people to decorate their wrists and necks with rose colored necklaces and bracelets, ‘Chang’s Temple’ (‘Zhangjia Cha’) color has been described as “China rose.” Rose is a color halfway between red and magenta on the HSV color wheel. It has a large to very large semidouble flower with up to 20 heavily notched petals in 4 or 5 rows with an open center that may have petaloids. The leaves are very large.

‘Lion Head’ (‘Shizitou’) has a deep red large to very large peony flower with irregular heavy crinkled petals at the base that may arch and cover the center of the flower as it matures not unlike a lion’s mane. When variegated, it is called ‘Cornelian’ (‘Domanao’). The beautiful flower is large to very large red with blotches of white on the irregular wavy, crinkled petals. There may



‘CAPTAIN RAWES’



‘MOUTANCHA’

be a few petaloids in the semidouble to peony formed bloom. It is an example of early camellia variegation in China which is likely where the camellia virus originated.

The history of ‘Captain Rawes’ is interesting. Chinese records indicate that between 1673 and 1681 a semidouble blooming cultivar was introduced to Japan called “Tang Dynasty” in English. It is the same cultivar as ‘Captain Rawes’ which was introduced to England from Canton, China in 1820 by Captain Richard Rawes. The flower has a very large semidouble carmine rose pink flower with irregular petals.

‘Moutancha’ has a large to very large formal double bright pink flower with white veins that are striped white in the inside of the wavy crinkled petals. It is interesting that Descanso kept the Chinese name for this cultivar which means peony flower due to its similarity to the peony.

‘Pagoda’ (‘Songzilin’) has a deep scarlet formal double to rose form double flower. The depth of the flower and its striking color make for a popular variety both in China and America. In 1847 on one of his plant gathering trips, Robert Fortune, a great plant hunter, imported a *reticulata* cultivar to England that he labeled *C. reticulata, flore plena*. It has at times been called ‘Robert Fortune’, ‘Pine Cone’, ‘Pine Cone Scales’ and ‘Pagoda’ but is known in China as ‘Songzilin’ which means pine cone. The large red formal to rose form double has petals that may open like pinecone scales. ‘Pagoda’ is how it is listed in the *Camellia Nomenclature* while the International Camellia Registry uses the Chinese name.

Professor Tsai in China crossed 'Butterfly Wings' with 'Moutancha'. Descanso Gardens named it for him. 'Professor Tsai' ('Mayae Taohong') has a medium rose pink semidouble flower with undulating petals.

'Purple Gown' ('Zipao') has one of the most complicated *C. reticulata* flowers with a large to very large formal double to peony dark purple red flower with thin strips of white to wine red on the wavy petals.

A large brilliant pink semidouble flower with loose wavy petals was named 'Shot Silk'. It grows vigorously, and has vivid lively flowers which has led to its being widely distributed. Since red is the dominant *reticulata* color, this lovely pink flower makes 'Shot Silk' special.

One of the many reasons to visit The Huntington Botanical Gardens is that you can see all these *C. reticulata* cultivars.



'PAGODA'



'PROFESSOR TSAI'



'SHOT SILK'



'LION HEAD'



80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CAMELLIA SOCIETY

BY BRADFORD KING

On January 16, 2020 the Southern California Camellia Society celebrated its 80th anniversary at the society's monthly meeting.

The Southern California Camellia Society (SCCS) was organized in January 8, 1940 by 30 charter members. They had an organizing dinner meeting at the Constance Hotel on Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena. Most of those present were camellia nursery owners. They elected Lovell Swisher as president even though he was a rose man. Dues were set at a \$1.00 a year.

THE USA IN 1940

In 1940 a new house cost \$3,920.00, and the average family income per year was \$1,725. The average cost of a new car was \$850, and gasoline was \$0.11 a gallon. However, the Ford Super Deluxe Coupe would have cost you \$1,395.

Men could get a suit for as little as \$24.50 and women their nylons for \$0.33.

World War II dominated the news in 1940 with Germany invading Denmark, Norway, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Germany began bombing London to weaken the British Royal Air Force.

President Roosevelt signed the Selective Training and Service Act, making it the first military draft to be created during a peacetime in the United States. He was elected for an unprecedented third term as the U.S. president.

SCCS IN THE 1940'S

The *Camellia Nomenclature* was first published by the SCCS in 1947 under the leadership of William "Bill" Woodroof. He was its organizer and editor from 1947 through 1990. The 1947 edition contained 911 cultivars and had a black cover with the large red bloom 'Mathotiana' on the cover. (Photo of 'Mathotiana')

During the first five years of the existence of the SCCS, one cent post cards were sent out as meeting notices. Later a single page newsletter was sent to members. The earliest SCCS *Camellia Review* was from 1950. Hard cover copies were used during the 1950's.

SCCS TODAY

The 2020 *Camellia Nomenclature* is the twenty ninth edition with 7,000 cultivars listed, and the *Camellia Nomenclature and Picture Gallery* has all these cultivars with over 3,000 photos to help in identifying camellia blooms.

The *Camellia Review* has been continuously published since 1950. Today it is published three times a year and is illustrated with digital photographs which were not available until the late 1900's. While the first digital camera prototype was built in 1975 by Nikon, the first professional digital camera was introduced in 1991 and cost \$13,000. The *Camellia Review's* first digital photos were taken by Mel Belcher in 2000 when he was the editor. Today everyone has a point and click digital camera built into their cell phones.





'SOLSTICE' CREDIT: DAVID PARKS



OPTICAL ILLUSION: CREDIT GENE PHILLIPS

CAMELLIA SPECIES:

C. FLAVA

BY BRADFORD KING

C. flava was scientifically described by Sealy in 1949. It is native to the green forests and hillsides in northern Vietnam. Until it was rediscovered in 1994, it remained unknown to the camellia world. Since then it has been grown in China and recently America. The yellow miniature flower blooms on a 15 foot well shaped dense tree. The leaves are small with raised midveins and depressed lateral veins. The flower has from 10 to 13 petals which makes an attractive tubular semidouble bloom.

This yellow blooming species has been used in breeding programs most notably by Dr. Clifford Parks. He has introduced two hybrids, 'Solstice' and 'Optical Illusion,' that are propagated by *Camellia Forest Nursery* in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. 'Solstice' has a light-yellow medium rose form double flower. The plant has narrow green foliage with a long tip. It grows vigorously in an upright manner. It was crossed with *C. japonica* and registered in 2009 by Dr. Parks, a botanist and noted camellia hybridizer.

In 2015, he introduced 'Optical Illusion' which has a medium formal double pale-yellow flower with pink overtones. The strap like petals look best when arranged in a spiral. These hybrids seem to be sterile, so they can't be used to back cross or used to set seeds to produce new varieties. Therefore, Dr. Parks is working on doubling the chromosomes to produce deeper yellow camellias that are hardier. I have tried to graft good quality scions of these cultivars with limited success.



PHOTO BY GENE PHILLIPS



HIGO CAMELLIA TREASURES FROM JAPAN:

‘MIKUNI NO HOMARE’

This higo has a beautiful, medium veined pink flower with a fine white border and occasional red stripes. There are 7 undulating petals and 150 to 190 golden stamens that have pale yellow filaments arranged like the spokes of a wheel in the classic higo style. The name means “Nation’s Pride”. The leaves are dark green, elliptical and wavy. It was officially recognized in 1961 and become popular in Japan, Europe and the US with those who admire higo camellias. It is grown as a bonsai and looks good in the garden. The Huntington Botanical Garden has one in its collection, and Nuccio’s has them available for purchase. The flower’s background is variable as is the delicate crimson veining and the number of red bars. This can be observed in the photo. Bradford King

PARTING SHOT:

SNOW

In Southern California we rarely get snow except periodically on the San Gabriel mountain tops such as Mount San Antonio, better known as Mount Baldy, which is 10,064 feet tall, the highest mountain in the area. It gets about a foot of snow or more per annum. Snowflakes are ice crystals that precipitate from the atmosphere and take many shapes. No wonder there are pure white camellias with interesting forms bearing ‘snow’ in part of their name.

Nuccio’s *C. sasanqua* ‘Snowfall’ has a small single white flower. It can be seen in bloom across from the Chinese garden in The Huntington Botanical Garden. This area has a good collection of *C. sasanquas* planted on a hillside. They are all fall blooming camellias that peak in November. *C. sasanquas* are the first camellias to bloom every year providing a taste for what is coming. They are the camellia appetizers with japonicas the entree that bloom in the winter.

The Japanese *C. sasanqua* cultivar ‘Mine-No- Yuki’ means “Snow on the ridge.” It has also been known as ‘Snow’ and frequently in the USA as ‘White Doves.’ It has



‘SNOWFALL’



'WHITE DOVES'



'SNOW CHAN'



'SNOWMAN'

a small semidouble to loose peony flower. It makes a good ground cover in sunny areas because it has a low spreading growth habit.

When *C. japonica* 'Shiro Chan' mutated a large to very large pure white anemone flower, Joe and Julius Nuccio named it 'Snow Chan' in 1957. Joe's son, Julius ('Jude') graduated from high school that year and went to work full time with his father and uncle. Jude told me they agreed that his Uncle Julius would be his boss and give him any necessary "orders." A good strategy to keep peace in the family.

The *C. japonica* 'Snowman' originates from Savannah, Georgia where it rarely snows and, even then, may not accumulate enough to build a snow man. Therefore, its large semidouble flower, with curled and twisted inner petals and notched, incurved outer petals, when coupled with its pure white color, provide its name. It is a complicated flower that blooms midseason on a vigorous spreading upright plant.

In conclusion, fresh clean white snow is a treat and so are pure blemish-free white camellias. Bradford King



Inside Back Cover:
'Rudy's Magnoliaeflora'
Photo Credit: Bradford King

Back Cover:
'Hiryu Flying Dragon'
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