

THE
Camellia
REVIEW





INSIDE COVER: 'HANA-DAIJIN-SPECIAL' Photo by Bradford King
FRONT COVER: 'PINK-A-BOO' AND 'YULETIDE' Photo by Bradford King

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THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

THE CAMELLIA SEASON BEGINS

BY BRADFORD KING

Autumn is the beginning of the new camellia season. The shorter days and cooler temperatures trigger the sun camellias to bloom. The *C. sasanqua* thrive in full sun and make excellent landscape plants with a wide range of lovely colors. Nuccio's offers over 50 cultivars, so the article "A Dozen of the Best *C. sasanqua*" discusses ones that won't disappoint and are available locally.

When shopping for camellias in Southern California, the first choice is always going to be Nuccio's Nurseries. However, don't overlook San Gabriel Nursery which has been operating for over 100 years. They have a good selection of larger cultivars including *C. sasanqua* 'Egao', 'Star Above Star', 'Kanjiro', 'Shishi-Gashira',



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'White Dove', 'Yuletide', and one not found at Nuccio's, namely 'Pink-A-Boo'.

There are other garden centers that carry Monrovia Nursery camellias, namely Armstrong's Garden Center. It too has a good selection of five-gallon *C. sasanqua* cultivars. Monrovia Nursery is a wholesale Nursery begun in Southern California in 1926 by Harry E. Rosedale. Today this employee-owned nursery delivers plants throughout the country. They grow a variety of camellias of which eight are fall blooming sun camellias. They registered *C. sasanqua* 'MonDel'. The "Mon" stands for Monrovia and "Del" for the daughter of the man who discovered this sport. They market this sport of 'Yuletide' as 'Pink-A-Boo'.

Home Depot also carries sun camellias. They carry a limited selection of the dwarf *C. sasanqua* trademarked as the October Magic Series developed by Bobby Green. These cultivars were bred to have lovely small dark green foliage with abundant flowers. The plants remain small and compact and do well in the foreground, under windows, and as a hedge. I have been growing 'Ruby' in a pot for three years and purchased 'Orchid' this fall but have passed on others not in good condition. My video of the 12 October Magic cultivars can be seen on the SCCS website and on the ACS website under Brad King's SCCS videos. Even if you don't plan to grow them, they are worth seeing.

A closing note: Nuccio's prices are best but many times they are sold out of larger cultivars, which may be found at the other locations discussed here. However, it is good these other venues accept credit cards.

A DOZEN OF THE BEST

Camellia Sasanqua

BY BRADFORD KING

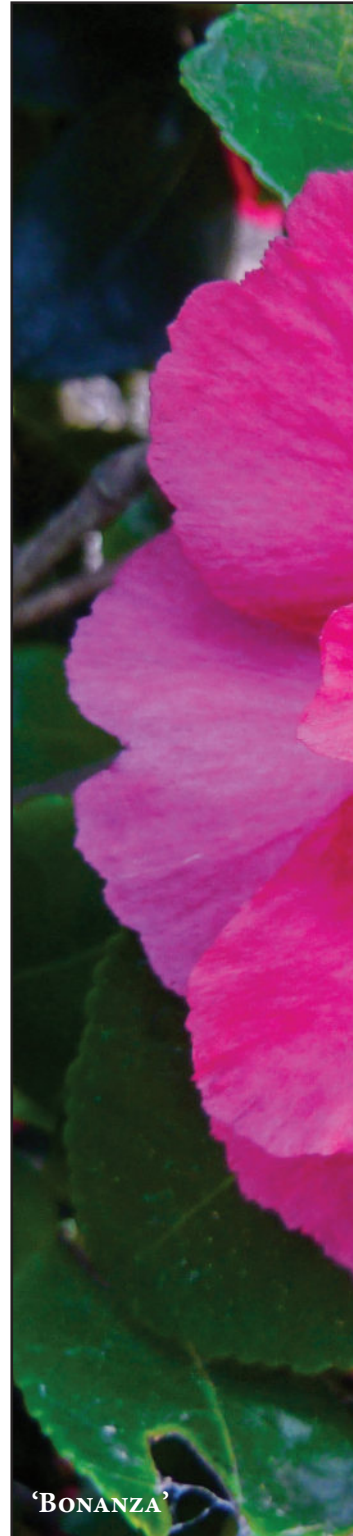
C. sasanqua is recognized as a camellia species that is native to the evergreen coastal forests of the southern Japanese archipelago. The native species has a small white flower borne on a small tree or shrub. The propagation of colorful new cultivars that thrive in the sun and bloom in the fall means there are now hundreds to choose from. Nuccio's Nurseries offer 50 in their catalog. This article highlights the 12 best to grow, with options from early to late bloomers to assure blooms from September through January.

THE BEST EARLY CULTIVARS

'Bonanza' grows on a low growing plant. It is one of the best early blooming red sun camellias. In 1965, it was awarded the Ralph Peer Sasanqua Award.

'Hugh Evans' has profuse single pink flowers with twisted petals. While a single flower may not impress, this early bloomer makes a colorful display with its mass of flowers.

'Showa-no-sakae' has a semidouble to peony soft pink flower borne on a low growing vigorous plant. It is useful as a ground cover with lovely clear pink blooms.







‘HUGH EVANS’

THE BEST MIDSEASON CULTIVARS

The midseason cultivars typically peak in November and continue into December before the ornamental *C. japonica*, *C. reticulata*, and the non-reticulata hybrid cultivars begin to bloom.

‘Double Rainbow’ is a popular Nuccio’s introduction due to its bright white flower, conspicuous golden stamens, and edges in a lovely rose red.



‘SHOWA-NO-SAKAE’



‘DOUBLE RAINBOW’



'JEAN MAY'



'KANJIRO'

Several *C. sasanqua* cultivars have white flowers with red borders. This is one of the best.

'Jean May' has many formal double shell pink flowers. Mature specimens have masses of blooms making it an attractive landscape plant. Ralph May named it for his daughter Jean May Colbert.

'Kanjiro' has a semidouble brilliant rose red flower. This is one of the most versatile camellias. It can be a landscape plant, a hedge, trellis, or espalier and is sought as rootstock for grafting. It is vigorous in its growth habit. It was awarded the Ralph Peer Sasanqua Award in 1999.

'Pink-A-Boo' has a small to medium single flower with seven petals and a mild scent. It is a pink sport of 'Yuletide' discovered and propagated by Mon-



'PINK-A-BOO'



'SHISHI-GASHIRA'



'MINE-NO-YUKI'



'EGAO'

rovia Nursery who registered it as *C. sasanqua* 'MonDel'. The "Mon" stands for Monrovia and "Del" for the daughter of the man who discovered this sport.

'Shishi-Gashira' has a semidouble to formal double bright rose red flower on a compact low growing plant. Mature specimens will reach five feet by eight feet and maintain their shape with little pruning. It will reliably bloom year after year. It was awarded the Ralph Peer Award in 1991 and 2006.

'White Doves' has a white semidouble flower borne on a low growing plant. Its low growing growth habit makes it popular as a ground cover. It is Nuccio's Nurseries most sought-after cultivar by landscapers. It is a Japanese cultivar that was named 'White Doves' to help market it, but its priority name is 'Mine-no-yuki' which means "Snow on the Mountain." It was awarded the Ralph Peer Sasanqua Award in 2010.

THE BEST LATE BLOOMING CULTIVARS

The late blooming cultivars may begin in December and continue through January providing flowers when early blooming *C. japonica* are beginning. They fill a niche in the camellia blooming season between most *C. sasanqua* and the *C. japonica* hybrid cultivars.

'Egao' (Smiling Face) has a large pink semidouble flower borne on a vigorous upright spreading plant. This is one of the best late blooming sun camellias whose blooms overlap the fall and winter camellias. It was awarded the Ralph Peer Sasanqua Award in 1990.

'Shibori-egao' is the viral variegated form of 'Egao'. It has a very showy

medium to large flower with deep rose-pink petals mottled with various amounts of white.

'Star Above Star' has a medium white flower that shades to lavender pink on the petal edges. The unique semidouble flower, with one set of petals superimposed

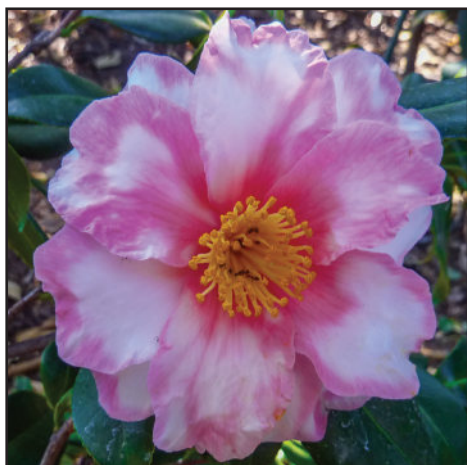


over another, was awarded the Ralph Peer Sasanqua Award in 1969. This upright plant is usually the top winning flower at camellia shows in its class.

'Yuletide' has a small bright red flower with five petals and golden stamens. It grows in a sturdy compact upright manner. This cultivar is one of the most widely grown *C. sasanqua* and cherished for blooming in the holiday season. Nuccio's Nurseries was awarded the Ralph Peer Sasanqua Award in 1974 for this seedling of 'Hiryu'.

CONCLUSION

We note that typically *C. sasanqua* are used as landscape plants, but Nuccio's grow them all in pots ranging from one to seven gallons. Consequently, growing them in a pot provides options like using them to decorate a sunny patio.



'SHIBORI-EGAO'



'YULETIDE'



'ASPASIA MACARTHUR'

'ASPASIA MACARTHUR' AND ITS SPORTS

BY BRADFORD KING

Camellias were first introduced to Australia in 1831. They were imported for Elizabeth and John Macarthur's home and garden at Camden Park in Southern Sydney, which was built in 1834. Their son William was enthusiastic about camellias and developed the camellia garden. Macarthur's descendants still reside in the house and on the property.

William introduced 'Aspasia Macarthur' in 1850. The flower is a creamy white medium peony with a few random red markings.

He named this camellia Aspasia for a woman who was famous in the literary world in Athens, Greece. According to Wikipedia, Aspasia was portrayed in the theater as a prostitute. However, today she is regarded as a sexually liberated

woman and a feminist role model fighting for women's rights in ancient Athens.

'Lady Loch' is a genetic mutation of 'Aspasia Macarthur', registered in 1898 by Cremorne Nursery in Melbourne, Australia. The flower has a pink flower with a white border. In other words, it is an example of a color break that has retained the medium full peony form.

In 1949, Carter registered 'Strawberry Blonde' in the U.S. She is also known as 'Glamour Girl'. The flower is a creamy light salmon pink with deep pink speckles and blotches. It was named for a woman's reddish hair with blond color tints. It is naturally a rare color, but with the help of a hairdresser, is more frequently seen.

In 1952, 'Camden Park' was registered by Macarthur and named for the Macarthur family estate. 'Camden Park' is a sport of 'Aspasia Macarthur' that retained the medium full peony form but has a rose bloom with creamy markings.





'STRAWBERRY BLONDE'



'OTAHUHU'



'JEAN CLERE'

In 1950 in New Zealand, a rose pink sport of 'Aspasia Macarthur' was found and propagated. 'Otahuhu Beauty', like all of the 'Aspasia Macarthur' genetic mutations, has the medium full peony form.

The name Otahuhu is the Māori name for the volcanic cone known as Mount Richmond.

Also from New Zealand is the sport 'Jean Clere', which has a full red peony flower with white petal edges. This 1969 bloom is a color reversal of the more popular 'Margaret Davis'.

'Margaret Davis' is one of the very best medium camellia flowers. It has a creamy white peony flower with a few rose red dashes and vermillion petal edges. It is a popular camellia show flower that is usually one of the winners in its class. It has won the Australian Research Award 27 times since the trophy was established in 1975.



'MARGARET DAVIS'



'CAMDEN PARK' AT THE HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS



‘MAN SIZE’

CAMELLIA FLOWER

Symbolism

BY BRADFORD KING

Camellia flowers have symbolic meanings generally associated with romantic love. However, different colored blooms may have more specific symbolism.

The white camellia flowers in western cultures symbolize adoration. White camellias come in all sizes and are illustrated below by three very popular varieties.

'Man Size' is a sport from 'Magnoliaeflora' caught by Hody Wilson. When entered at camellia shows, it usually is the top winner as a miniature or small camellia. The name refers to the size of a man's boutonniere. It is an adorable little anemone beauty.

'Ragland Supreme' has a medium formal double flower making an elegant bloom with its interlocking petals that never show stamens.

The large semidouble flower 'Silver Waves' has golden stamens contrasting with large white petals, which makes striking blooms due to its mass of stamens.



'RAGLAND SUPREME'



'SILVER WAVES'



'PINK-A-BOO'



'AVE MARIA'



'PHYLLIS HUNT'

PINK CAMELLIA FLOWERS EXPRESS LONGING

There are beautiful pink camellias in each of the ornamental species. 'Pink-A-Boo' has a single flower with a sweet scent that represents pink *C. sasanqua*. It is the beautiful sport of 'Yuletide' with five to seven petals. The center is a deep pink that shades to lighter pink. It is propagated by Monrovia Nursery who trademarked it as 'Pink-A-Boo', but the nomenclature name is *C. sasanqua* 'Mondel'. The "Mon" refers to Monrovia Nursery, the propagators. "Del" is the initials of the daughter of the man who found the sport among the 'Yuletide' plants at the nursery.

There are hundreds of pink *C. japonica* that express longing. 'Ave Maria' has a medium silvery pink formal double flower that gets its name from



'E. G. WATERHOUSE'



'NUCCIO's BELLA ROSSA'



'FIREDANCE'

the song composed by Schubert, which has been performed and recorded by many singers. It is also a prayer honoring the Virgin Mary.

A wonderful example of a pink *C. reticulata* flower is 'Phyllis Hunt'. The very large flower has shades of pink to white. John Hunt registered and named it for his wife.

Non-reticulata hybrids are crosses of two camellia species. The Australian Eben Gowrie Waterhouse was a professor of German and comparative literature and a camellia breeder who introduced 'E. G. Waterhouse', one of the first formal double non-reticulata hybrids to become popular worldwide.



'JULIUS NUCCIO'

RED CAMELLIA FLOWERS REPRESENT DESIRE AND PASSION

Red has a range of tints or hues that may provide nuances to the 'CABERNET'





'MATHOTIANA'



'CARDINAL'S CAP'



'MAROON AND GOLD'

flower's symbolism. Red is a primary color that best symbolizes desire. It is a popular camellia color which includes 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa'.

Brilliant red is an intense tint of red that symbolizes passion. Camellias 'Firedance' and 'Red Hots' are good examples.

When the flower is a brilliant dark red like 'Bob Hope' and 'Julius Nuccio', it symbolizes a deep passion like Julius had for camellias.

Burgundy is a dark purplish red. This is illustrated by the small formal double camellia 'Cabernet' noted for its rich burgundy color like the wine Cabernet Sauvignon. It symbolize desire or subtle passion rather than intense passion.

Crimson is a strong bright red like a cherry with a tint of blue or violet resulting in a tint of purple as illustrated by *C. japonica* 'Mathotiana'. It symbolizes more sensual passion as opposed to overt sexual desire.

Cardinal is a vivid red color named for a Cardinal's cassock. The *C. japonica* 'Cardinal's Cap' reflects the vivid red color called cardinal. The color is associated with spirituality and a passion to be close to God.

Maroon is a dark brownish red color from the French marron or chestnut. It denotes a more controlled desire than bright red. The

small loose peony formed by *C. japonica* 'Maroon and Gold' illustrates this camellia color.

Turkey red is a color used in the 18th and 19th centuries to dye cotton from the Ruba plant root, which originated in India and Turkey. It was brought to Europe in the 1700s. The color is also used to refer to a turkey's wattle. The *C. japonica* 'Kramer's Supreme' symbolizes passion.

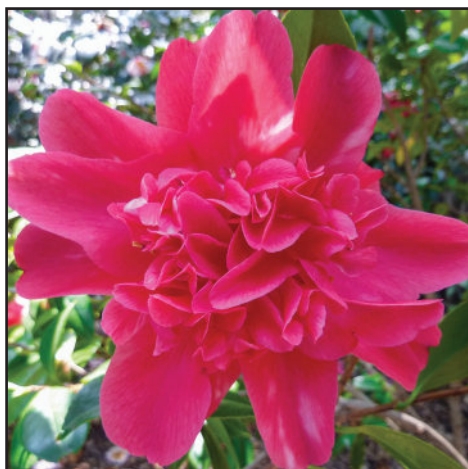
The first record of "rose red" to describe a red camellia was in 1743. The name originates from roses and is a frequent camellia color. It is perceived as a color between red and pink but more to the red side than the color rose pink which is more to the pink side. It symbolizes a desire for love and romance. When a brilliant red, it reflects passionate love.

'Covina' is a rose red *C. japonica* as is 'Mark Alan' and 'Rudy's Magnoliaeflora'.

When a flower is very dark, it may also be described as black red. The iconic black red camellia is 'Black Magic', which also is described as glossy to further clarify what it looks like. It symbolizes a deep smoldering passion.



'KRAMER'S SUPREME'



'MARK ALAN'



'BLACK MAGIC'





SUNRISE

CAMELLIAS FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET

BY BRADFORD KING

Sunrise occurs when the sun first breaks the horizon in the morning.

It is a beautiful moment that has inspired camellia names such as ‘California Sunrise’ and ‘Mountain Sunrise’.

In 1988, Nuccio’s registered a blush pink camellia. It has a medium to large semidouble flower that blooms earlier than most *C. reticulata* hybrids due to its being a cross with *C. sasanqua*. Since the lovely pink reminded them of the sunrises they see in the morning at the nursery in Altadena, California, they called it ‘California Sunrise’.

The sun has inspired names for several camellias that have bright colors. The Higo ‘Hi-no-maru’ means sunshine. It is undoubtedly named for its excellent bright golden stamens that light up the center of the red petals like the sun lights up the day.

When the sun suddenly bursts from behind clouds, it is called a sunburst. ‘Carter’s Sunburst’ is a large pink flower with wonderful stripes that light up the flower just as sunbeams light up the sky.

Sunburst is also a design consisting of beams of light radiating from a central disk that resemble sunbeams. This is illustrated by the sun king de-



‘CALIFORNIA SUNRISE’



‘HI-NO-MARU’



‘CARTER’S SUNBURST’

sign found decorating Versailles. Louis XIV was known as the Sun King who ruled France for 72 years and whose royal court was located at Versailles.

The sunny side of the garden has bright light that may also have shading with darker tones of color. This is captured by *C. japonica* ‘Sunny Side’. It has a small to medium bright clean single white flower that shades to vibrant pink petal edges. ’

‘Scented Sun’ has a large to very large white flower with occasional pink markings and a lovely light scent. It was bred by Ken Hallstone from Lafay-



THE SUN KING



‘SUNNY SIDE’



'SCENTED SUN'

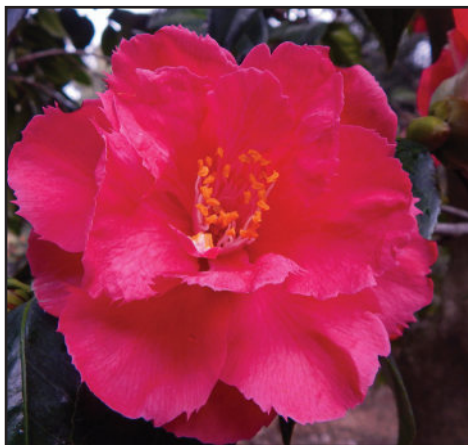


'ISLAND SUNSET'

ette, California, a pioneer breeder of fragrant camellias.

During the day there may be rain. Is this the motivation for naming 'Rainy Sun'? The flower is a medium to large red flower with fimbriated petals, which makes it distinctive from other red camellias.

A sunset is particularly beautiful when the sun sets on lakes with islands, which inspired the name for the rich coral pink tones of 'Island Sunset'. It is a great day when it ends with a glorious sunset.



'RAINY SUN'



SUNSET



C. rosaeiflora



'BABY BEAR'

CAMELLIA SPECIES:

C. ROSAEFLORA

BY BRADFORD KING

C. rosaeflora has a small single pink flower that blooms mid to late season on an upright plant, which has an arching growth habit. The slightly fragrant pink flowers bloom profusely. The foliage is elliptical and pointed and sometimes may be mottled light yellow. A small well-formed tree with dense green foliage is formed over time. It is a good garden plant that has been cultivated widely and is native to China.

In 1975, Nevil Hyden, New Zealand, registered 'Baby Bear', a cross between *C. rosaeflora* and *C. tsaii*. It has a single miniature light pink to white flower that grows on a dwarf compact upright plant.

Nuccio's Nurseries introduced a *C. rosaeflora* hybrid, 'Bunny Ears', in 1999. It has a miniature to small pink semidouble flower with upright petals. When a camellia flower has upright petals, they are frequently described as rabbit ears, hence the name.



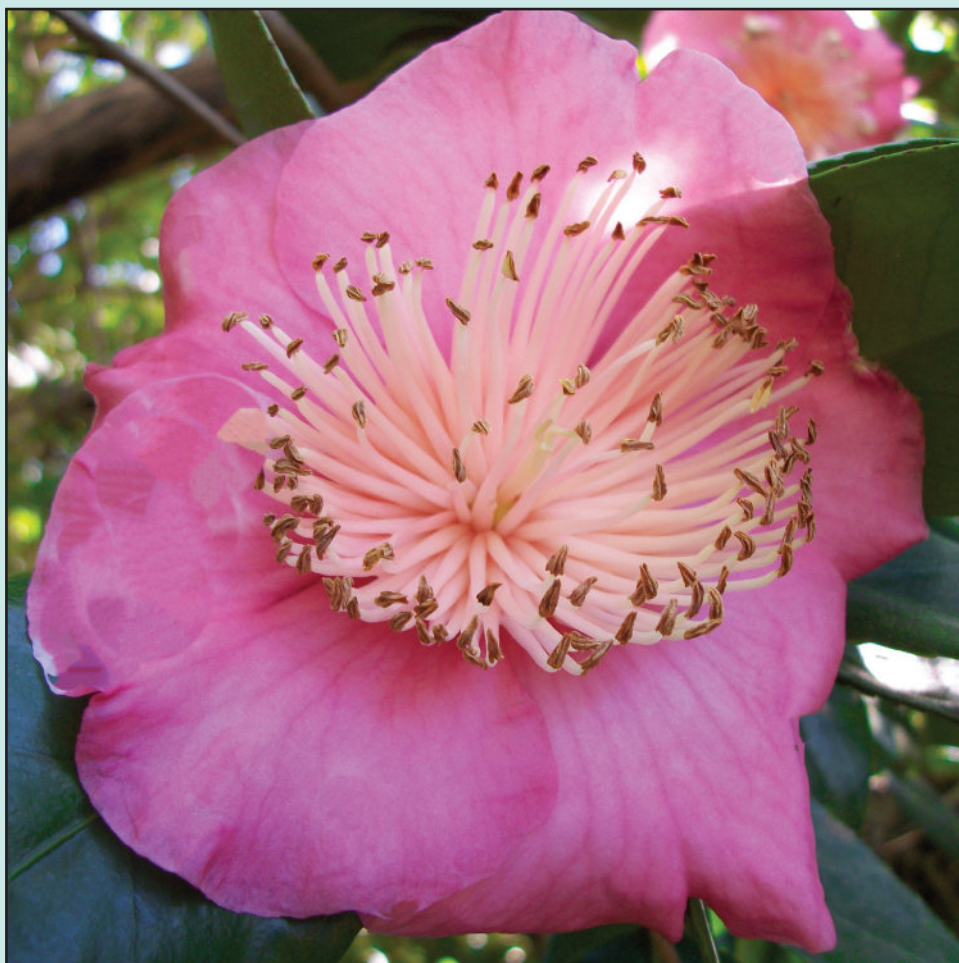
'BUNNY EARS'

HIGO TREASURES FROM JAPAN:

‘DAITAIRIN’

BY BRADFORD KING

‘Daitairin’ (Large Camellia From Dewa) has a large to very large single peach red flower with circular stamens. It occasionally has petaloids in the center that may make it look like an anemone flower. It grows in an upright manner that makes a cone shape. The Japanese Camellia Society report that there is a 300-year-old plant thriving.



‘DAITAIRIN’



'TARO-KAJA' AKA 'JUDITH'

PARTING SHOT:

C. WABISUKE

BY BRADFORD KING

C. wabisuke, pronounced “wa-bis-kay”, are camellias from Japan. They are similar in appearance to *C. japonica*. While the origin is unknown, some consider it a subspecies of *C. japonica*; however, most experts consider it to be a hybrid with *C. japonica* in its lineage.



'FUKURIN WABISUKE'

How it acquired the name Judith is unknown except we Americans do prefer English names and have a long history of naming flowers after women. Its priority Japanese name is 'Taro-kaja'. He is an unsophisticated country bumpkin character in Japan whose dialect is not understood by his educated master, and he does not understand his master. This mismatch creates a comedic drama. The flower is a miniature to small single deep pink that grows on a slow compact bushy plant and blooms mid to late season. There are large ancient specimen trees of this cultivar in Japan.



'SHOWA WABISUKE'

Nuccio's Nurseries describe the plants as small to medium leaved and shrubby. The flowers are tubular, single, and small. Most don't have stamens and only a few anthers. They produce plants of simple beauty. The *C. wabisuke* camellias are delightful landscape camellias that add variety, beauty, and fragrance to the garden. Three of the most desirable are 'Judith', 'Fukurin Wabisuke', and 'Showa Wabisuke'.

'Judith' ('Taro-kaja') is the most well-known *C. wabisuke* in America.

'Fukurin Wabisuke' (Bordered Wabisuke) has a lovely scent. The flower is light pink, small, single with a white border. Tom Nuccio recommends not trying to say this camellia name after two glasses of wine.

'Showa Wabisuke' has a very fragrant, small, single, white flower toned light pink. There are at least a dozen camellia names beginning with "Showa," which refers to an era in Japanese history. It is not the equivalent of the English adjective showy.



'CHOJI GURUMA'



‘KANJIRO’