

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Camellia

SOCIETY BULLETIN

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Published monthly from October through April, and in July.

The Society holds open meetings on the Second Thursday of every month, November to April inclusive, at the auditorium of the new library of the Pasadena City College, 1500 Block East Colorado Street. A cut camellia blossom exhibit is always held at 7:30 p.m., with the program starting at 8:00.

Application for membership may be made by letter. Annual dues: \$4.00.

CAMELLIA PRUNING

By R. SANFORD MARTIN

*Author of "How To Prune Western Shrubs,"
and "How To Prune Fruit Trees"*

In the preparation of any sort of information on the pruning of Camellia plants, one is confronted by a rather outstanding fact. Namely, that possibly one of the main reasons why Camellias have reached the stage of popularity they now hold is because, as a group, they may be grown successfully without any pruning whatsoever.

After such a beginning statement it might appear that there is no need for reading the balance of this article. However, there are certain rules to be followed when it becomes necessary to employ some control over our Camellia plantings. Even though Camellias are rated generally as one of our slower growing ornamental shrubs, they sometimes do outgrow their original location, all of which may necessitate corrective treatment to keep them in bounds.

There is certainly nothing about the Camellia that should discourage any one from planting these beautiful shrubs, as far as pruning is concerned. There have been thousands of plants grown to a ripe old age without benefit of pruning of any kind. But it is the desire of any true plantsman to give his or her plants the most intelligent care possible, therefore these few simple rules that have been set down. If more Camellias are planted in the sun as a result of people reading this article, the writer will be greatly satisfied. In spite of the opinion of some experts, if any Camellia variety is planted in the sun and given sufficient "root insulation," it will be successful, providing correct soil conditions are maintained.

When it becomes necessary to do any pruning, there is one primary rule to follow. That rule is to select the best time of year in which this work is to be done, in order to attain the best results on the plant. Therefore, the most favorable time would be that period immediately following the blooming season, before the first cycle of new growth starts. With some varieties, this will limit the pruning period to just a few days.

Due to the fact that Camellias will vary from year to year, as to exact flowering time, one cannot say correctly that the necessary pruning be done on any specific date. The time must be regulated by the blooming period. By remembering this one point as to time, any possible trouble which might result from pruning at the wrong time of year, will be eliminated.

If a major cut were made during either one of the growing cycles it would cause unusually soft growth, in excess of normal, and flower buds do not usually set on very soft weak wood of this nature.

Camellias bloom on new wood only. Therefore one should never resort to exterior cutting of any kind. Whenever a plant has grown out of bounds and control measures must be applied, select the branch that is to be cut, and follow it back into the interior of the plant far enough, so that when cut out there are no offending extensions remaining. The illustration will further describe this procedure.



SHOWING HOW TO PRUNE FROM THE INSIDE.

is not only against the nature of the plant, but may prove a trouble maker, where Camellias are grown in the southwest area particularly. Reasons for this will be given, and in the opinion of this writer, is one of the most important phases of Camellia culture.

About twenty-two years ago, the writer attended a lecture on Camellia culture, and the speaker made a statement at the time, which appealed to my natural instincts, and which I have had the pleasure of proving many times over, both in my own garden and in advising others. The statement in brief was as follows: "that if the fluctuation of temperature on the roots, was held to a minimum, Camellias could be grown successfully in full sun." This led me to experimenting with various plant materials that would control this fluctuation of temperature. Violets were finally selected and used in thick planting over the root area of the Camellias, and maintained until the plant had developed its own shelter.

It was found that the correct amount of feeding could be administered to the Camellias right through the violets, and they also acted as a sort of feeding barometer. If the violets were burned as a result of too much fertilizer, one could be sure that the Camellias had too much, also.

When making the actual cut, have the blade side of the shears up close to the lateral branch, or main stem, as the case may be. Do not leave a stub without an active sap flow, or it will gradually die back, and cause possible trouble later on. Any cut that is more than three-eighths inches in diameter should be covered with pruning compound of some sort.

Make no more cuts at any one time than are necessary to correct the shaping of the plant. Just remember that all the wood on the exterior of any Camellia plant is potential flowering wood.

Do not attempt to keep the Camellia plants trimmed up away from the ground, as this

As the Camellia grows, allow its own dead leaves to accumulate, which will gradually build up a mulch to replace the violets as they are crowded out from lack of sunshine. The addition of a prepared Camellia mulch will maintain the soil health, so essential for best results.

If one wants proof of the above idea, just remove all litter from the base of a Camellia, grown in all or part sun, and cut away all lower branches which would shelter the root area, leaving the soil exposed to the normal temperature changes of from day to night. Just see what a short time is required for large black sunburn spots to appear on the foliage.

This system of growing Camellias in full or part sun, is next to impossible with container grown Camellias.

Now to get back to pruning and its relation to the above system of sun-growing. In making any major cut on a Camellia plant, where it is grown in the sun, care must be taken not to open up too big a "hole" that might cause stem sunburn on the interior of the shrub. If too drastic a remedy is needed, it would be better to spread the cutting over a period of two years.

As a general rule, where a large cut has been made, the first and second cycle of summer growth will fill the "hole" that has been made, and before the sun develops much burning ability.

Old plants will require the removal of dead twigs and branches from the inside of the shrub. This condition is not caused necessarily by improper growing, in fact quite the reverse is true. A perfectly normal Camellia should produce an almost solid exterior of foliage, which will cause almost complete elimination of direct or indirect sunlight to the inside of the shrub. This condition will cause the leaves to lose their normal function for the plant and will fall off to the ground. The twigs which supported these leaves, now being deprived of sap activity will slowly die, and should be removed when they reach this condition. Again the time for this work is immediately after the bloom is finished.

Another approach to the problem of pruning would be more careful selection of growth habit types, so that columnar types would not be planted where a spreading habit is wanted, etc.

For instance, a few varieties may be used as type examples which are common enough so that every Camellia fancier is familiar with them. These varieties may be duplicated in growth habit with a liberal color range to choose from. Any good Camellia nurseryman should be able to give valuable service, aiding in proper selection. Be sure though that the nurseryman knows his business as to variety types.

As examples of the tall growing Camellias, that can be relied upon to attain considerably more height than spread, Purity, Aloha and Pink Ball would be typical. The writer saw an old specimen of C. Purity that was twenty-two feet tall, with slightly less than eight foot spread. It would be a mistake to plant Camellias of this group habit beneath windows, because heavy pruning will not aid the beauty of any of them.

For the 'spreading types, such varieties as Chandleri elegans, Grandiflora Rosea and Finlandia would best represent the growth habits of this group. The collector has an almost unlimited range to choose from in this group, because most Camellias are of the spreading type. In this class also the varieties will lend themselves best to the development of their own root insulation. Planting of varieties in this group should be done with plenty of allowance for mature spread, because where plants become interlaced as they approach mature development, the more vigorous will eventually crowd out the slower grower.

The dwarf or low growing group is much more limited, it having one outstanding leader in the Countess of Orkney. Two others that might be considered as low growers would be Monjisu and Dai Kagura. There are others that could be planted that would stay fairly low. These should require little or no attention as far as pruning is concerned until they are twelve or fifteen years old.

If one is planning a yard for permanence and expects to spend not less than twenty-five years there, the planting of Camellia trees should be given some attention. For this group one could use Purity again, or such varieties as Enrico Bettoni or Col. Firey. In this group it will be of the utmost importance to develop substantial root insulation before the lower limbs are cut away to develop the tops above the clean trunk.

To sum up this article, pruning of Camellias should be done only when a plant gets out of bounds, because regular pruning will not noticeably improve the quality of either bloom or plant. When it does become necessary to make a cut, do so with much thought and consideration. Camellias are slow growers, and it will take a long time to outgrow any unwise "butchering" of branches.

NEW EDITOR FOR THE BULLETIN

Due to the pressure of his duties as a newspaperman, J. R. Mayfield finds that he is no longer able to devote sufficient time to the editing of your Camellia Bulletin, and has handed in his resignation, effective as of the last bulletin.

Replacing him as editor will be Arthur S. Kane. Mr. Kane is at present on the staff of Griffin-Patterson Co., the printers of the Bulletin. He is therefore fortunately placed to expedite the mechanical phases of getting out your Bulletin, as well as handling the editorial assignment.

Mr. Kane is a Yale graduate, a Missourian by birth, who came to California some twenty years ago. He has had a well-rounded experience in the writing and editing fields, having edited house-organs, trade magazines and books for publication. He has written dozens of articles and stories, both in the trade field of writing, and in the general fiction market. He has one published novel to his credit, an adventure story. Before joining Griffin-Patterson, Mr. Kane was supervising editor of Lockheed Aircraft publications during the four preceding years.

At present, Mr. Kane is not a Camellia hobbyist, but his new connection may lead him to become one!

A GREAT CAMELLIA LEADER PASSES

In the passing of Roy J. Wilmot on May 7th, the camellia world lost one of its most devoted, enthusiastic and hard working leaders. Long associated with the University of Florida, Roy Wilmot specialized in camellia research, problems of camellia culture, pests and disease. In 1939, he established the now celebrated Camellia Test Garden on the grounds of the University, and began his lifelong work of varietal nomenclature. Not only did he become learned in the names themselves, but in the minute characteristics of the varieties. His memory for camellia minutia was marvelous.

Wilmot's friends felt that his work of nomenclature could be speeded by a national society devoted to the camellia. So, at a meeting of leaders in this field at Savannah, Georgia, on February 10th, 1945, the American Camellia Society was born, with Wilmot as secretary, an office he held up to his death. As secretary, he also planned, edited and partly wrote their Yearbook, a book which has been characterized by camellia fanciers everywhere as "worth the dues, alone."

Roy J. Wilmot was an outstanding camellia authority and leader, yet a man of the homey, home-spun variety with friends and well-wishers around the world. He listened with patience to any camellia grower with a problem, no matter how trivial. His friendly, and authoritative, word will be greatly missed by us all.

NEWS OF AFFILIATED SOCIETIES

New Officers for the KERN COUNTY CAMELLIA SOCIETY, elected at their last regular meeting, are: President, Mrs. Allison Ely, 1230 South Union Ave.; Vice-President, Mrs. Louise Davis, 233 Hermosa Drive; Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Don Wheeler, 2416 Terrace Way, all of Bakersfield.

At a recent meeting of the SAN DIEGO CAMELLIA SOCIETY, the following officers were elected for the 1950-1951 terms.

President, Dr. R. W. Tellam, 717 9th St., Ramona, Calif.; Vice-President, Mr. Wm. E. Peyton, 3065 "C" St., San Diego, Calif.; Secretary, Mrs. Althea Hebert, 4710 Harbinson Ave., La. Mesa, Calif.; Treasurer, Mrs. Emily Carringer, 2115 30th St., San Diego, Calif.

At their regular meeting on March 27, the TEMPLE CITY CAMELLIA SOCIETY elected the following officers to serve during the 1950-1951 season: President, George M. Richardson, 316 S. Encinita St.; Vice-President, Robert M. Leeper, 535 N. Oak Ave.; Secretary-Treasurer, Lynn Timm, 2936 Daines Drive, all of Temple City.

Report of Directors Meeting

The Society's Board of Directors met for their monthly meeting at the home of W. L. Rifenberick. Those present were President W. L. Rifenberick, First Vice President Dr. John H. Clairmont, second vice president Ernest F. Elmer, secretary-treasurer Col. C. M. Gale and directors C. D. Cothran, Vern O. McCaskill, Clifton W. Johnson and Victor J. Wagoner. Directors Peer and Scott were absent.

The matter of reprinting the Nomenclature Book was discussed, but the matter was held in abeyance because the secretary advised we have had sufficient copies returned from show consignment to carry us thru this summer. The sale of the Nomenclature Book has been most satisfactory.

The Secretary reported on attending the annual meeting of the Pasadena Flower Show Association. Their shows were not nearly as successful from the financial standpoint as the one of the Southern California Camellia Society and Pacific Camellia Society which was also held at Brookside Park. He also attended the meeting of the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum as your Society's Representative.

An informal request was received from the Pacific Camellia Society to have a joint show with your Society in 1951 at the Fannie E. Morrison premises. After due discussion it was voted to express our willingness to have a joint show. The Secretary was instructed to make formal application to the City of Pasadena for the Fannie E. Morrison Building the latter part of February or the first of March 1951 for a Camellia show.

Letters were read from two gentlemen expressing their appreciation for complimentary memberships in your Society. One was from Mr. L. M. Dean of Hong Kong. He was most helpful in keeping and then shipping the Reticulatas to your society. We are really indebted to this gentleman. The other letter was from Mr. D. M. Campbell, Curator of Kew Gardens in London.

The meeting was adjourned to 10:45 P. M. to the next meeting on July 18th at the home of Director Elmer.

PACIFIC SOCIETY ELECTS

At the last meeting of the PACIFIC CAMELLIA SOCIETY, of Glendale, Calif., the following officers were elected to serve for the 1950-51 season: President, Mrs. E. L. Korts, 3628 Revere Ave., Los Angeles 26; Vice-President, Dr. A. A. Payette, 1967 No. Edgemont St., Los Angeles 27; Secretary, Mr. Raymond A. Riggs, 1447 Norton Ave., Glendale 2, Calif.; Treasurer, Mrs. Margaret V. Lockhart, 3941 Chevy Chase Dr., Pasadena 2, Calif.

The Camellia Bug...

... he'll getcha, ef you don't watch out!

by

JOHN H. CLAIRMONT

Starting out some four years ago with one, or possibly two camellias, I now find myself with some three hundred plants and around two hundred seventy-five varieties. With meager beginning as a novice you suddenly realize you have a full time chore for week ends; with watering, feeding and spraying, keeping your containers clean, you more than earn the flowers when they start blooming, or you can be like a friend of mine who stated that when the plants start blooming they are his and the rest of the time they are his wife's—get the point?

But seriously, let us discuss why we get so many and why we want them. Everyone has his pet variety whether it be single, semi double, formal or what have you, and they all can be had in different colors and variegations. Now why do we want them all? In the first place, the "camellia bug" is a persistent little cuss; he gnaws and gets in deeper all the time, and we simply must have everything our friends have, good, bad and indifferent.

I sometimes wonder if we just don't acquire a new name sight unseen. "Jim Doakes" gets on the market or we hear about it even sooner than that, and we simply must have it—we get it on hear-say testimony. I recall one that I have; "Green's White"—not too well known. I waited three years for its first blossoms and they were worth while, but nary a good flower since.

Some of the older varieties are still fine camellias and hard to beat, but that does not satisfy us, we must get into the revolving cage with the rest of the squirrels and around and around we go until we get every name we hear about. Please note that I say name, because I believe that is what it amounts to. We leave no stone unturned until we get a plant or scion of that new red hot number.

We can't have them all, that is certain, so to properly build up a choice collection of camellias—quality and not quantity—let us approach our hobby sanely and acquire only a few new varieties each season, and then only after we have seen a representative flower. In that way have more time for their care and enjoyment.

Just because I like Susie Q is no reason why you should. Tastes and likes vary. If that were not so, we would not have horse races.

Now of one thing I'm sure. Regardless of the food for thought this article may provoke, you and I will still build up our collection the same old way; want everything within sight or hearing, become very secretive; and still go on thinking we're having lots of fun. If you are like me, you should realize that the "Camellia Bug" has really got you.

SUMMER CARE AND CULTURE OF CAMELLIAS

By JULIUS NUCCIO

With another glorious blooming season of camellias completed the time to prepare for next winter's prize-winning blooms is here. All who have enjoyed camellias in their gardens since September know what tireless bloomers camellias can be and how little in the way of care and culture has been necessary these past months. Now that the blooming season has ended for this year, it will pay good dividends to invest a little time and thought to culture, so that you will again be rewarded next season with these beautiful blossoms.

First and most important in the summer culture of camellias is water. During the growing season when next year's blooming wood is being formed camellias require an abundance of water. In average soils a thorough soaking once a week and in between sprinklings of foliage is sufficient, but never try to water your camellias by a given schedule or definite instructions from a nurseryman. Most all garden growing conditions will vary so much that it would be impossible to get a definite schedule to follow. Just remember never to allow the soil to get on the soggy side and never allow your plants to completely dry out. Water whenever your plants need it. In the summer months a daily sprinkling of foliage is beneficial, but caution should be taken for those camellias that are being grown in a sunny exposure. These should be sprinkled in early morning or towards evening. Working hand in hand with good watering of camellias is the maintaining of a good mulch of peat moss or leaf mold.

Fertilizing should start as soon as the plants have finished blooming and continue not later than August. A mixture of 10 parts cottonseed meal to one part soil or dusting sulphur makes an excellent fertilizer. Sulphur guards against alkalinity you may be getting in your water or already existing in your soil. However, most of the specially prepared camellia acid foods are satisfactory. Three feedings spaced at least 30 to 40 days apart is usually sufficient, but if the camellia plants are small and you are desirous in obtaining size to the plants, it is advisable to feed lightly once a month beginning in March and ending in August. However, if the plants are large enough to produce an abundance of blooms, fertilize once each in March and June and again, lightly, in October or November. Take care that the plant to be fed is not in need of water, for feeding a dry plant will result in burning. It is far better to underfeed rather than overfeed, for a fertilizer-burnt plant seldom recovers.

Insect damage to camellias, if any, will usually start when new growth makes its appearance. A precautionary spraying (Volck, 1 to 50) of the plants when they have completed blooming will often eliminate the necessity for spraying during the warm summer months. However, if spraying becomes necessary during the summer, Volck (1 to 75) is satisfactory. Chewing insects that feed on the tender new growth can easily be controlled by applying poisons such as arsenic or chlordane on the plant and surrounding soil.

Remember—good blooms next fall depend on good culture this summer.

CAMELLIA IMPORTER'S PROGRESS REPORT

By WILLIAM E. WYLAM

I believe the principal hazard in importing Camellias is the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture requirement that all soil be washed from the roots and that the plants be shipped with the roots protected only by a covering of Sphagnum Moss (or some similar material). This is a terrific shock to the plant and many react by dropping all or part of their leaves even before the shipment has reached its destination.

Another and almost equally severe hazard is the fumigation with Methyl Bromide that almost all shipments receive at the time they are inspected at the Port of Entry.

A third hazard, particularly in Southern California, is the low humidity and excessive heat prevailing during June and July, the period many shipments are received.

The problems attendant to the first two hazards can be helped, or at least minimized, by the shipper. If special preparations are made to harden the plant and to induce the formation of root forming Hormones within the plant, the shock of being shipped bare root is not as severe.

I have been fortunate in my importations of Camellias from Australia in that my friend, Mr. Walter G. Hazlewood, has taken a very special interest in supplying me with strong, stocky, well grown plants, as well as in doing everything possible to see that the plants reach me in the best possible condition.

To this end he and his propagator Mr. E. C. Kirk, have been so careful in checking all plants for Disease, Scale and Insect Pests that in two instances the Officials of the U.S.D.A. in San Francisco have found it unnecessary to fumigate the shipment. These Officials, I understand, inspect shipments so thoroughly that it is very seldom a shipment is inspected and found safe for entry without fumigation.

Mr. Hazlewood has conducted a number of experiments in an effort to select the best materials to use in packing the plants and to find the proper moisture content of the packing material.

He has also conducted a series of experiments in an effort to determine the best preshipment treatment of the plants. He has found it best to have the plant as nearly dormant as possible, and at the same time in a state where the plant has begun the development of Rooting Hormones, so that it will begin a new cycle of growth as soon as possible after it has again been planted, following shipment.

Mr. Hazlewood has found that if the plant is selected in early May (which in Australia corresponds to the conditions we find in November) bare rooted and placed in a cool propagating house, the preliminary shock, under controlled conditions, hardens the plant and prepares it for the greater shock which follows.

At this end I have also tried several methods of treatment in an effort to save a maximum number of the plants I receive. I believe the most important thing is to get the plants potted and in a place where they will

again be able to resume their normal functions quickly. Even a few minutes exposure of the roots may mean the difference between success and failure.

I have changed my methods radically since my first efforts in 1947. I first placed my plants in a shaded Cold Frame which I normally use to root cuttings. However the humidity is so low at this time of the year that despite my best efforts, the plants, being larger and having more leaf surface, as well as being planted in pots, could not be kept as humid as my flats of cuttings and I soon saw that this method was not satisfactory.

I then rigged up a mist nozzle (such as is used by Orchid and Fuchsia fanciers), and placed it in the deep shade of a large Black Walnut tree. The plants were grouped around under the mist nozzle and protected from drying winds by a shelter of burlap.

This was a decided improvement over the Cold Frame but had the handicap that the mist nozzle sometimes dripped and caused the soil in some of the pots to be too wet.

The next year I tried a modification of this method in that I did not place the plants directly under the mist nozzle.

I also placed a number of plants under large glass jars in the same manner as I would treat newly made grafts which are placed under inverted jars to protect the tender tissue from drying. This was suggested by Mr. Hazlewood in describing the method used by Dr. Maurice Amsler, of England, in handling plants received from Australia. This worked very well with small plants. I kept the jars over the plants until a complete cycle of growth had been made and hardened, the weather had cooled, and the plants were comparatively dormant. This method can be recommended where only a few small plants are to be handled and one gallon, and larger, jars are available.

However the next year's shipment contained plants which were too large for one gallon jars, the largest I had, and I decided to combine some of the best points of the two methods, using a small glass house which I had just purchased.

The house was made as tight as possible and a mist nozzle installed inside where it would furnish the necessary humidity but where the plants would not be wet by any drip. The top and sides were covered with burlap and a perforated pipe placed along the top of the ridgepole. This was turned on just enough, during the day, to keep the burlap moist as the evaporation of the water from the burlap, as well as the extra shade, helped keep the temperature inside the house as low as possible with the humidity high. The ventilators (covered by the moist burlap) on both sides of the ridge and on each side of the glass house near the ground were opened a crack during the day. These were closed at night and the water shut off from both the mist nozzle and the perforated pipe.

This worked very well and one shipment was saved entirely without harm to a single plant. In fact I like this method so well that I am using the same procedure with the plants that I received this year.

In spite of the increased percentage of live plants secured this last season, I must report that I am a long way from really knowing how to handle

(Continued on page 23)

Research Committee Report

Results of the extensive three-year program of your Horticulture Research Committee will be published in September. This report will include about fifteen papers on various phases of camellia culture, touching on such subjects as nutrition, effect of organic matter on growth, effect of continuous light, increasing the life of cut camellias, pollination, seedling culture, differences in varietal rootings, hybridization, controlling soil salinity, and other informative material of value to all camellia growers.

Members will receive their copies without extra charge, in place of our regularly issued September number of the Bulletin. Additional copies may be obtained at \$1.25 each.

GRIFFIN HITS HOME RUN

We have literally stopped the presses to insert a brief word about the splendid first issue of the CAMELLIAN, just now received from Columbia, South Carolina, and published by that robust young camellia society in our sister state on the Atlantic.

Editor Frank Griffin has given all camellia publications a new high mark to shoot at. If he continues his "quarterly" on the same high plane of the first issue, and we believe he will, the CAMELLIAN will soon have newsstand rating.

Those interested in obtaining a copy may write to Mr. Griffin, Box 175, Columbia.

Vive la South Carolina Camellia Society!

In the list of Exhibitors at the Society's last show, reported in the June issue, the name of Tuttle Brothers, 729 Atlantic St., Altadena, was inadvertently omitted.


Membership Application



To The Board of Directors,

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CAMELLIA SOCIETY

40 N. SAN RAFAEL AVE., PASADENA 2, CALIFORNIA



I hereby make application for membership in your society and enclose \$4.00 for the current year's dues.

Name (Please print or type) (Husband and wife combined same rate)

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Signed

Members receive the book, "The Camellia, Its Culture and Nomenclature" revised every two years, and the society's magazine, published eight times yearly.

Open meetings are held on the second Thursday monthly, from November to April, inclusive, at the auditorium of the Pasadena City College Library, 1500 block East Colorado Street, Pasadena, Calif. Flower exhibit at 7:30 P.M., program at 8:00.

Application may be made by letter

Dear Member: Will you kindly indicate in space below what subjects you would like covered by our program chairman next season.

Mail this section to

W. L. RIFENBERICK, President
1725 Ben Lomond Dr., Glendale 2, Calif.

(CUT HERE)

Dear Member: Kindly indicate in space below the type of articles you feel would make for greater reader interest in our Bulletin.

Mail this section to

DR. JOHN H. CLAIMONT, Chairman Bulletin Committee
1818 Oak Knoll Road, Glendale 8, Calif.

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS

Do You Know How To—

MAKE CUTTINGS?

MAKE SUMMER GRAFTS?

MAKE CLEFT GRAFTS?

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Do You Know—

WHEN AND WHAT TO FEED?

HOW TO GERMINATE SEED?

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You Do! You're Lucky. Thousands don't, or at least would like to have authoritative answers to some of their more puzzling hobby questions.

So...

during the coming season, beginning with our October number, we will devote a full page in each issue to Questions and Answers.

Send in your questions and we will get the answer from the best available authority.

Mail in your questions to . . .

Bulletin Committee Chairman
1818 Oak Knoll Road, Glendale 8

WHY NOT COMBINE CAMELLIAS WITH AZALEAS?

By ROMA COOLIDGE MULVIHILL

When planning to combine Camellias and Azaleas in your planting, take into consideration not only their almost identical cultural requirements, but their complementary attributes. True, the soil differs, in that Camellias thrive in a combination of one-third each of peat, leafmold and a good sandy loam, while Azaleas prefer pure peat. However, as the holes are prepared separately, this problem presents no difficulty.

In plantings, either formal or informal, Camellias provide the height and backbone, so to speak, while the Azaleas furnish the intermediate and low effects. There is just enough contrast in the size and character of the foliage to give balance, and a well chosen selection will give abundant color from October through April.

I have in mind a particularly lovely garden where spreading oaks dot the landscape. Here Camellias and Azaleas have been used informally over a wide area. In the Spring, not all gardens are blessed with spreading trees, and it may be necessary that the side of your house, preferably the north or northeast, provide the required protection for your planting, but there, too, one may work out charming effects.

The color series in Azaleas is truly marvelous; all of the colors, with the exceptions of a clear yellow and a true blue, together with an endless range of tints and tones, are to be found. Also the variety of form and size of plant and flower is great and suggests infinite adaptability. Azaleas have a sweet simplicity and naivete not to be found in many flowers. Used as pot plants, for house or patio, they display delightful individuality.

In Southern California we find several evergreen varieties that thrive and offer the ultimate in charm and color: the Kurumes, Indicas, Indica-macranthas and Rutherfordianas. All through the months of March, April and May they present an unforgettable pageant of bloom.

Certain of the Indicas and Kurumes bloom intermittently throughout the year and, with their large, spectacular blossoms, leave little to be desired. During the last few years, the Kurumes have been developed into one of the most diversified collections in all Azaladeadom. Then there are the Indica-Macranthas, or early summer flowering Azaleas, with their oriental habit of growth and sparkling flowers.

Camellias, although boasting of fewer colors, offer a variation in character that is quite remarkable, and no flower can lay claim to greater distinction. Here in our Southland, Camellias comprise, primarily, two groups known respectively as the Japonicas and Sasanquas. The first, and by far the larger group, includes the broad leaved and spectacular, single, semi-double and double flowering kinds of upright growth habit, while the Sasanquas have small foliage and ethereal single or semi-double flowers with lovely yellow stamens. One of their chief charms is their utter lack of formal symmetry.

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THE CAMELLIA FOR GOOD LANDSCAPING

By HARVEY F. SHORT, Box 445, Ramona, Calif.

So much has been said on the subject "Camellia," that one searches for new ideas—variety, culture, usages that are not in constant repetition.

There are new varieties (new seedlings and sports) being proven and finding their respective places in the many, many gardens.

Culture remains very much standardized, as to a more or less set pattern of feeding, watering and soil conditioning to attain much desired results; but the many ways of using Camellias can still add much more enjoyment and pleasure for the years to come than many owners of this finest of all shrubs have yet visualized.

Landscaping the small lot, the cottage home, or the more expansive areas under the oaks, or the sun-filtered spaces, can bring into focus breathtaking beauty—not too hard to attain.

Consider the planting that requires the fewer plants. Here espalier form has a definite place. What could enhance a garden wall or a lathed summer house more than the rich glossy green of the Camellia, patterned against it, laced or studded with the flower of your color scheme? The dainty small singles to the gorgeous splash given by large singles or semi-doubles are at their best with this treatment.

The variety Amabilis as a ten year old specimen elicits wholehearted admiration from all who gaze upon it. Lady Clare, Sergeant Barrios, the lovely Imura, that dainty miss My Darling, and the several interesting members of the Sasanquas group—Apple Blossom, Briar Rose and Hugh Evans are typical of varieties that lend themselves in this enchanting manner. For a more confined area, the Maliflora Lindley, "Betty McCaskill" is incomparable.

Container grown material is more and more becoming the chief requisite for the patio garden. The beautifully designed new redwood tubs are the perfect and permanent complement to the elegant specimen that the Camellia presents. Tall, pyradimal or columnar types fill that very definite accent beside a doorway or an imposing corner.

The very handsome Elena Nobile is a perfect example to pattern your needs after, along this line. "Pax" in white—Pink Ball and possibly Debutante and Purity—could be emphasized in like manner.

Where the more compact and rounded bush is desired, the very gorgeous Eugene Lizze and its parents, the equally fine Donckelari, could not be improved upon. Compact growth, handsome foliage, showy flowers that extend over long blooming periods characterize them. A few others of such habit and super merit are the old timers, Romany (Belgium Red) with its very dark rich foliage, the vigorous Princess Bacciocchi, the early flowering Dai Kagura group, including High Hat and for your white—the Alba Plena offers about everything in grace and beauty.

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LAZY MAN'S PERFECT HOBBY

THE CAMELLIA

Life is a lot more interesting when we can be frank and honest with ourselves even though we don't like to always express that same frankness to our friends. Which all leads to one thing. We are all somewhat lazy.

The degree varies with different people. Some are just naturally lazier than others but I am just plain lazy in many things. That is why Camellias are my hobby. This may or may not be the reason so many other people have adopted the Camellia for theirs.

You can enjoy and have the most beautiful Camellia plants and flowers with so little effort. Of course you must plant them first of all but no plants or shrubs are any easier to get into the ground. It is good to put a little leaf mold and peat moss into the ground when planting but that is only a temporary help. It decays and the roots eventually reach way out beyond the benefit of the materials put into the soil originally. Many good plants are planted without the benefit of anything but the native soil. Many of mine are planted with nothing more than virgin sandy soil. They are doing well probably because they do get some fertilizer once in a while.

When one gets over being too lazy, you can feed them a little good food. Latest research seems to clearly indicate that it makes very little difference whether the soil is slightly acid or slightly alkaline. Some people feed their Camellias a couple of times a year. Others seldom ever and others quite often. I know of one plant about 10 feet high that grew wonderfully well without benefit of fertilizer for several years. It grew well but this is not to be construed that you should not feed your plants because they should definitely be fed.

Another thing in my lazy makeup that makes the Camellia appeal to me is that the roots grow near the surface of the ground. Therefore do not cultivate around them. That's what I like. Don't dig around them. Just plant, feed, water and let grow. Of course you can pick lots of blossoms.

You can plant the Camellias in almost any part of your yard. I have them on the north, south, and east and west side of our house. In deep shade and in full sun. They seem to grow equally well. Don't be so lazy that you fail to consult your favorite nurseryman to get his advice on which to plant where or consult the Nomenclature Book. In general, just plant the lighter shades in the shade and the darker in the sunnier locations. Another thing is to also consult your nurseryman to be certain you do not get a plant that drops its buds most of the time.

In order to save additional work, you can plant a ground covering to keep the weeds out. Thus you see the Camellia is really the Lazy Man's plant. You can grow them in very heavy soil or exceedingly sandy. In very hot climate such as the San Joaquin Valley, Imperial Valley, Sacramento Valley or in the colder climates of Washington and Oregon as well as the Southern States. At this time the main growing of the Camellia seems

(Continued on page 24)

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CULTURE OF CAMELLIAS IN AUSTRALIA PARTICULARLY IN NEW SOUTH WALES

By WALTER G. HAZLEWOOD

The coastal districts of New South Wales, more particularly from the central part down to the southern border, are as suitable for the growing of camellias as any part of the world. The main reasons for this are warm humid atmosphere in the summer and a fairly cold winter, without being too cold so as to spoil the flowers by frost. In the arid interior the air is too dry, and the temperature too hot, for the best results, but some measure of success may be obtained, if the plants are grown in shade and protected from hot winds. In Queensland, which is nearer the tropics, *C. sasanqua* and the earlier flowering varieties of *C. japonica* do best. In Melbourne, Adelaide and the mountain districts of New South Wales, early flowering types are liable to be spoiled by frost, and here the midseason to late varieties are more in favour.

As most of our Australian soils are of a slightly acid nature, camellias can be grown successfully over a very wide area. Only those soils which are of a limestone origin present difficulty. I have heard of *C. sasanqua* doing quite well in such soils, so perhaps this species is capable of wider distribution than is generally credited to it.

Although camellias, in most parts of Australia, can be and are grown in full sunlight, many varieties do better with at least partial shade. The lighter coloured sorts, such as *Magnoliæflora*, *Incarnata*, *Toki-no-hagasane*, keep their delicate shades better than when in full sunlight. *Alba plena* and *fimbriata* grow better in shade than in full sunlight, and *Alba grandiflora*, or *Lotus* as you have it in America, does not ball as much when shaded.

Although camellias can be moved from the open ground if taken with a ball of soil, I prefer container grown plants for sending out to customers. Plants taken from the ground must of necessity have a lot of their roots cut, and I find that it takes a year or two before the plants get into stride again. The container grown plant, as long as it has not been too long in the same size tin, gets a move on straight away. One that is pot bound and yellow in the leaf is no good at all. Do not think that I am looking for any controversy on this point, but I am only giving my experience as applied to Australian conditions. Quite a number of people grow them for many years in large tubs or pots, and if due attention is paid to regular watering, manuring, and top dressing each year, they can be grown indefinitely in this manner.

Propagating in Australia is now done almost entirely by means of cuttings. In the past, it was mostly by layering, and in a few cases by grafting. Owing to excessive cost, layering has been discarded by all except a few of the smaller nurseries. Personally, unless the very young tip is used and the work carried out in December, using the same procedure and material as would be done with a cutting, I do not care for plants raised by means of layering. When old wood is put down, it does not make the same root as a cutting, and in most cases, needs another year, after removing from the

parent plant, before it is fit to send out to a customer. Although the plant is larger, my experience is that in a few years time the plant raised from a cutting has outgrown that from a layer. Camellias grow so quickly in New South Wales that I cannot see any need for the extra expense of grafting. Apart from the extra time and labour involved, there is always the tendency for the stock to grow up and spoil the graft. I use the graft for *C. reticulata* because I do not know of any other successful way of propagating this species. I have known of several amateurs who have raised *reticulata* plants from a cutting, however. A flower is cut off to put in a vase, and after the bloom has dropped the cutting is put in a cool place in the garden. But the number of successes have been so few that they cannot be considered a commercial success. I have also found that roots have formed on leaves which had dropped from one of my stock plants, but this of course would not have produced any growth.

I use two methods of grafting, firstly by inarching, and this is the most reliable, and secondly by tip grafting. For this method I select young plants of the required thickness and with leaves right to the ground. I take the top off and insert the scion in the cleft which I make in the main stem. The main thing about this method is to have the stock about the same age as the scion and to leave plenty of foliage on the stock to keep it healthy until union has taken place.

When camellias came back into favour and the demand increased, I was not satisfied with our old method of layering, so I started experimenting with cuttings. My first experience was woeful, about 90% failure. I used two growth cuttings and from old trees. Both were bad, as I found cuttings root better when taken from young plants or from an old plant which has been rejuvenated. My second year was not much better, but I did find out that the younger wood was giving results whereas the old wood was a failure. *Alba plenas* are particularly difficult. One or two will root after about six months, the rest just form big calluses and stay like that for two or three years, and then just fade out. I then, for an experiment, took nine cuttings which I considered much too soft. In three months time I had potted up six of these and the remaining three about six months later. Cuttings are taken in December and it requires experience to know when they are at the right stage. If too soft, they just drop their leaves and are useless; if too mature, they take months to root. The reason that we in New South Wales can grow our plants so quickly is that the cuttings are ready in December, are potted up in April, and ready for sale the following March. In Melbourne their cuttings are often not ready until March or April and they are not rooted before spring. In this way they take another year to produce the same size plant. Cuttings in the Sydney area must be taken between the end of the first week of December and Christmas. Otherwise they get too ripe and take longer to root—perhaps nine months—and also because the stock plants start to make their summer growth.

In conclusion, let me stress the need for raising new types by crossing the different species. One of the reasons for the decline of the camellia in the past was that people became tired of their faultless shape. If the nurseries of that time had brought out the singles and semi-doubles, doubtless their popularity would not have waned.

IMPORTER'S PROGRESS . . (from page 10)

my plants correctly. One occurrence that emphasizes the need for careful and deliberate action might well be of interest.

Some of my plants go the way of the weary and, other years when they reached the stage where they appeared to lack signs of life, I usually checked them off and dumped the pots. This last year, for various reasons, I did not get around to this until I was moving the plants from the glass house in early Winter. I carried the live plants out and placed them under the lath with my other "Aussie" plants and then started to clean up the place. Putting the dead plants in a flat, I carried this out to the compost pile and had already dumped several when I noticed a little live sprout coming from a root which had in some way been broken from the main plant. I then went back through those which I had already dumped and checked the few which were still in the flat. I found two others which had sprouted and two which showed signs of life in the stem below the surface of the soil.

I repotted these and placed them back in the glass house. The two which were merely alive finally died but the three which had sprouts have developed leaves and, while two are weak, one has put on strong growth this Spring and appears to be fine and healthy.

BULLETIN COMMITTEE FORMED

The officers of your Society feel that a certain standard of excellence has been achieved and maintained in your Bulletin, bringing you informative articles throughout the season. However, "to stand still is to go backward," according to the old adage—so in order to keep the Bulletin on the improve and try to reach ever higher interest among our members, your officers have formed a Bulletin Committee. Dr. John H. Clairmont is chairman, Arthur S. Kane, Editor, and E. C. Tourje and A. H. Dekker, members.

This team working together will endeavor to obtain the best in authoritative camellia information during the coming 1950-'51 season. All members are cordially invited to contribute worth-while material at any time. Address manuscript to Dr. John H. Clairmont, 1818 Oak Knoll Road, Glendale 8.

CAMELLIAS—AZALEAS . . (from page 15)

Both Camellias and Azaleas require good drainage, and, in the event of heavy soil, it is well to dig quite a deep hole and put a quantity of coarse gravel or rocks in the bottom. Be consistent in your watering, keeping them sufficiently moist at all times without creating a boggy condition, which is fatal. Give them three feedings of Cottonseed meal or an acid Azalea and Camellia food, at intervals of six weeks, during the growing period.

If you have never used an Azalea-Camellia combination before, and now plant one, you will have an aesthetic and optical treat in store for yourself, I'm sure.

LAZY MAN'S HOBBY . . (from page 19)

to be restricted to certain areas but it is believed they can be grown in most other sections of the United States. One thing is to get other Lazy Men who are willing to try them.

One thing about the hot desert areas is that in many cases the blossoms are even prettier than in the Los Angeles area. The hot climate does something for some plants and their flowers. Remember you can grow beautiful flowers in almost any part of California. You never have to get up in the night to smudge or cover your Camellias. They have survived the coldest freezes we have had in California. One thing of which you can be certain—You will have your Camellia plants irrespective of the weather or temperature.

Don't worry about the bugs and aphids. Once in a while you might get a few aphids on some of your young leaves. Just wash them off with the hose or squash them with your fingers. That is a very effective way of getting rid of them. You don't have to spray them. Once in a while you might get a bug on them but don't let it disturb you. Pick them off or just let them alone. Camellias so seldom ever get buggy that you can almost forget about them. Just sit in your lazy chair and watch them grow.

Maybe you can be like Huckelberry Finn and get some one to trim or espallier some of your plants into interesting patterns and designs. You can grow a wall of Camellias against your house or fence. Prime them if you like to give a flat effect if you haven't much space. You can have a beautiful tree or a hedge which can be pruned to shape. Better get Huck to ask your nursery man which plants to use if you want to produce certain desired effects.

The principal thing is to be sure and let the "Camellia Bug" get a good bite on you, then you can plant as many plants as your pocket book will permit, water and fertilize them, then watch them grow and flower. They are really a "Lazy Man's Plant"—That's for me.

LANDSCAPING . . (from page 17)

Coming again to the larger expanses where line and design lead the eye on and beyond—conditions permitting, the hedging of this charming evergreen with its burst of winter or spring color is truly an inspiration to enjoy a type of such conformation as the often poorly-used Covina, which has hardiness, dense habit of growth, flowers on every twig; the older types of Monjisu, or Monjisu Red—or for tall hedge, the almost holly-like appearance of the dependable and beautiful Lady Vansittart could offer nothing more to be desired.

The foregoing is to emphasize the interest and merit we are to find in many of our Camellias. To seek flower beauty that competes only in the Show Room is to limit and discourage the usage of this shrub that has no end of possibilities. Study your varieties, new and old. Give them all a chance. They all have something to offer.

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