

A Magnolia Is a . . .

At the risk of attracting instant anathema from those who feel there's been enough hopscotch in the genus *Magnolia* already, we note here that we'll try to follow the various dicta laid down by Spongberg, Dandy, Hortus Third, and the Code of Botanical Nomenclature, as appropriate, by adapting to the new flurry of new names for our favorite old plant.

Among these are *M. heptapeta* for *denudata*, *quinquepeta* for *liliflora*, and *X wiesneri* for *X watsonii*. *Ashei* and *sinensis* henceforth will be referred to, if we can watch ourselves, as subspecies of *macrophylla* and *sieboldii*, and *pyramidata*, *stellata*, and *subcordata* as varieties of *fraseri*, *kobus*, and *acuminata*, respectively.

Among botanical names we'll try to forget are *X kewensis* and *X proctoriana* (both of whose type trees Spongberg includes within his concept of *M. salicifolia*), though the clone selected at Kew Gardens could still have the cultivar name 'Kewensis', and 'Wada's Memory' will still honor the famous Japanese nurseryman, whether it's assigned to *M. salicifolia*, *M. kobus*, or hybrid origin. In *M. kobus* Spongberg does not find enough consistency of characters to maintain a var. *borealis*, although there are strains which for horticultural purposes might be referred to as trees (how about *arborealis*!).

One general exception to Spongberg's classification is taken by AMS President McDaniel, who has made extensive field observations of the sweet bay Magnolias south of Virginia. He would maintain *M. virginiana* var. *australis* Sarg. as a distinct biological variety, generally more treelike and more often evergreen in tendency than var. *virginiana*. One difference that persists in herbarium specimens is the longer pedicel (internode between peduncle and flower), noted by Dr. Frank S. Santamour, Jr., and characteristic of the *virginiana* populations indigenous west or south from Savannah, Georgia.

If we can keep on the proper *qui vive* as the old names go by us we'll change them, particularly in articles written from this date forward, and perhaps use the former name in parentheses at first mention until we've got a little more used to the new. When printing older writings or references that use the former names we will, if we think it will prevent confusion, run the new names in parentheses at first mention. We won't bother with appending the names of the writers responsible for names unless we feel there's a helpful reason for doing so. We'll try to notify contributors to these pages about this policy beforehand and hope they'll agree, but if they object strongly enough we won't argue and will let them have their way. As of right now, we can't tell whether we're being dragged forward into the 20th century or backward into the 18th, but wherever it is, we don't aim to let it stop us from gabbling about our favorite Magnolias, no matter how they are called. —Editor