

# Excerpts from Robin 2, Flight 23

Edited by Harry Heineman

From Frank Mossman, on **oil spray for mites (again)**: The spider mite, white-colored, is a recurring problem for me, controlled temporarily by the oil spray, repeated at 10 day intervals, three times. Last time it was a bit too strong, causing defoliation. New leaves developed anyway, albeit slowly on some clones. Spraying of pots, soil, and surroundings does control, but does not eliminate the problem completely.

On **leaf wilt in basement greenhouse**: Early liberal dusting with captan powder applied with a handcranked blower is effective. Must be some kind of fungus, promoted by high humidity, insufficient light, and continuous ambient temperature, 70°F. The wilt begins at the leaf tip and rapidly involves the entire leaf then the plant stem, which turns black. Frequent application of the captan powder suppresses the problem but it ultimately returns when this grower becomes over confident. Movement of these container-grown grafts to partial sunlight and finally to full sunlight out-of-doors is the ultimate cure.

From Frank Galyon, on **origin of *M. grandiflora* 'Charles Dickens'**: The reason that I assume that a possible allotetraploid hybrid of *M. macrophylla* × *M. grandiflora* would be sterile is that the genes of the two species are probably so widely different from each other that there could not be pairing of the macrophylla genes with the grandiflora genes to form fertile gametes (either ovules or pollen grains). In effect, such a hybrid

would be triploid for grandiflora and haploid for macrophylla, and highly sterile. In fact, one of my named seedlings, *M.* × 'Emma Cook', is an example of such a sterile allotetraploid. It is from *M. stellata* 'Waterlily' × *M. denudata* and has proved to be completely sterile here. I wonder if *M.* × 'Pristine' from the same cross is equally sterile?

The cross of *M. virginiana* × *M. grandiflora* is a cross between two very closely related species that obviously share enough genes so that pairing can take place between the chromosomes of *M. virginiana* and those of *M. grandiflora*. Thus many, but not all, hybrids of these two are fairly to completely fertile . . . . Where the species *M. virginiana* and *M. grandiflora* overlap in nature, there are bound to be natural first generation hybrids between the two. Very likely there is also introgressive hybridization of *M. virginiana* genes into the *M. grandiflora* complex in subsequent generations.

From August Kehr, on **selection of later-flowering clones**: One thing that has been clearly demonstrated by my experiences of the last few years in the Hendersonville, NC, area is that we must have later-flowering clones. In this connection it would be helpful to identify late-flowering parents. For example, what is the latest flowering soulangiana? Other clones? For what is it worth, my latest flowering *M. denudata* is a seedling which was grown from seed from a plant on the Joseph Gable Farm, Stewartstown, PA. It flowers at least one week later than any of my other *denudatas* . . . . We need to recognize and identify late-flowering types, especially in the *Yulania* sub-genus.