

Robin notes

Edited by Harry Heineman

From Gene German, on

Repulsion of rabbits by some clones: There are rhododendrons that rabbits avoid. Some people that used to have a nursery in Fort Bragg, CA, would put their rooted cuttings out in beds in the lathhouse and go to Mexico each winter. On returning they would find that rabbits had eaten some hybrids, but avoided ones right next to them. They would eat every one of one variety and if the next plant was a variety they didn't like they wouldn't touch it. I don't know what the repulsive varieties are. Perhaps they are more poisonous. So maybe if you hybridized with the repulsive plants it would keep the rabbits away.

From Frank Mossman, on *M.* × 'Marjory Gossler': Roger Gossler reports that *M. denudata* × *M. sargentiana robusta* sister seedlings of *M.* × 'Marjory Gossler' have tolerated the climate of Phil Savage who made the cross. Roger's clone is absolutely breathtaking. The huge, heavy-textured, cupuliform flowers have a small splash of purple on the outside of the outer tepal base. The remainder being creamy-white. A blooming ten year old tree without leaves is enough to make a hybridizer truly thankful. The sister seedlings of this primary cross should all be interesting.

From Harold Hopkins, on the **Dodd Nursery Greshams:** I think that more effort should be given to saving these magnolia trees, for the potential for fine magnolias from this 1964 crop (Todd's biggest breeding year) appears to me to be better than continued selecting from Gloster Arboretum. Today (3/15/87) we saw many superb flowers and

photographed some of them. I would be happy to have any of those I saw in my yard in preference to any of the soulangianas. Some will probably be propagated in time. The entire remainder of the 1964 crop has been made available exclusively to John Smith to select, propagate, and distribute. There is another area of the nursery, however, that includes some post-1964 Gresham hybrids and a few of Todd's first selections (from his three earliest—1955—crossings). These post-1964 plants are in a separate area and Tom Dodd is not releasing these to anyone else, at least for the time being. This area has some really spectacular magnolias. I picked three different flowers, all for different reasons, and put them in a vase tonight. The odor permeates the entire house. The first one has a very large flower, about a foot across, and its flowers are not always erect, partly, I expect, because they are so heavy. The outside of the 9 tepals are a beautiful deep crimson, the insides of tepals lighter. The second, which I called Juicy Fruit, has a heavy fruity odor, and is a large flower, crimson shading. The third has a mixture of pink and salmon coloring at tepal bases and a lovely odor. It's the only salmon coloring I ever saw on a magnolia One thing that's needed now, among many things, is for the Gresham hybrids to be tested by gardeners in the colder zones. Those that survive have already demonstrated that they have done so in the hot temperatures of the south, and now their hardiness to cold needs to be shown.

From Carl Amason, on *M. grandiflora* - *M. virginiana* crosses: Frank Santamour, of the National Arboretum, at the MS

meeting there 11 years ago, said that such F1 crosses are almost impossible to detect, and a plant $\frac{3}{4}$ virginiana and $\frac{1}{4}$ grandiflora will begin to show intermediate characteristics; the F1 generation shows very few sweet bay characteristics because the grandiflora is so dominant. Then Santamour waved his arms around at some big *M. grandiflora* trees in a woodland planting . . . and said that almost all show genes of *M. virginiana*. I suppose that would explain the wide diversity of leaf size, color, indumentum, flower size, etc., which make *M. grandiflora* one of the most variable trees in cultivation.

On repelling deer: A common deer repellent here has been 1 raw egg, beaten, 1 tablespoon Tabasco pepper-sauce in 1 gallon of water. It is reported to be good for rabbits and deer. Amounts can be doubled. And it is safe in the environment.

From Frank Galyon, on **BBG's magnolia #374**: Altogether I thought #374 had the largest and the best-formed flowers of all the yellow-flowered magnolias at Kitchewan. It also had the broadest tepals of them all. It is a seedling of *M. 'Hattie Carthan'* crossed by pollen of *M. acuminata*. #374 has slightly lighter yellow flowers than 'H.C.' but I thought it vastly superior. Both of them have a rosy-violet flush at the base of the tepals.

On his hybrids *M. 'Purple Prince'* and '*Purple Princess'*: These are two siblings I raised from *M. liliflora* 'Darkest Purple' \times *M. \times soulangiana* 'Lennei'. The original trees are at the University of Tennessee Arboretum in Oak Ridge. Each will make a single-bole tree. 'Purple Prince' is the more vigorous of the two, and its flowers favor the shape of 'Lennei', whereas the flowers of 'Purple Princess' are shaped more like *liliflora*. Both

cultivars have flowers as dark as 'Darkest Purple' both on inside and outside of tepals.

On allotetraploids: An allotetraploid (from Greek, *allos*, meaning "other") is a plant that has four sets of chromosomes, yet not all four sets are from the same species. An example of a fertile allotetraploid would be *M. \times brooklynensis* 'Evamaria'. It has 2 sets from *M. acuminata* and 2 sets from *M. liliflora*. These two species are apparently genetically close enough to one another that their recombinations in subsequent generations show some segregation toward one or the other species. An autotetraploid has all four sets of chromosomes from the same species (*auto* is from Greek meaning "self" or "same"). An example is *M. liliflora*, itself.

From August Kehr, on his new **magnolia hybrids**: This spring ('87) many new hybrids flowered. The hybrid *M. tripetala* \times *M. sieboldii* (5-6 plants) was nice, but the flowers don't open widely. They were nearly identical to 'Charles Coates', which also flowered. I was much impressed with the hybrid *M. hypoleuca* \times *M. tripetala*. It was fragrant, superb texture, and like a large *M. \times wieseneri*. It may be an overlooked hybrid. 'Norman Gould' flowered, and is certainly a tetraploid *M. kobus*—not *M. stellata* as reported. I did have a tetraploid *M. stellata* flower and it was simply huge, but gorgeous. Hopefully next spring more of these tetraploids will flower.

On hardiness of '*Diva*' seedlings: That great hybridizer, Phil Savage, told me that most seedlings of *M. sprengeri* 'Diva' are less hardy than the parent. I am finding the same thing. I just hope that 'Eric Savill' remains hardy and will be a distinct advancement over 'Diva' itself.