

Magnolia sieboldii: the multitepalled forms

by Olav Kalleberg

For several years I have been doing some research work concerning *Magnolia sieboldii* (syn. *parviflora*), especially the double forms.

Neil Treseder has mentioned one form with 22 tepals called 'Kwanso'. He was referring to a plant in Japan, but it has been impossible to find this cultivar. Botanic gardens in Japan could not give me any information about *M. sieboldii* 'Kwanso', but I have heard from several sources that a clone called 'Michiko Renge' is available in some Japanese nurseries. While it is supposed to be a double form, I have no description of the flowers. Karl Flinck and Neil Treseder have both written about multitepalled forms without naming any cultivars. A well-known nursery in Holland did not know that double forms exist. I made up my mind to try to find an answer to the problem.

The first information came from Canada. The Royal Botanic Garden in Vancouver had a form with multitepalled flowers. They had received the plant from the Kawaguchi Trade Center in Japan. This cultivar was called 'Plena'. Scions were sent, at my request, to Mr. Eisenhut in Switzerland, but the scions did not arrive at the right moment, and all grafts failed.

From Karl Flinck I learned that The Arnold Arboretum at Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, had rooted cuttings from a double form growing in Gus Mehlqvist's garden. Robert Nicholson had succeeded in rooting more than 40 cuttings in 1988. I obtained one of these plants, but it perished during the flight because the soil was washed off. I really hope that this form of great value will be available for members of

The Magnolia Society.

Another form is growing in Hendersonville, North Carolina. August Kehr first told me about it. He has a seedling which sometimes produces multitepalled flowers with 36 tepals. I have not heard about a larger number. The flower resembles a white rose, and I call it 'Kehr's White Rose'. The tepals sometimes reflex backwards making a beautiful impression. The colored stigma in the center was not completely covered by the numerous tepals.

It is quite a problem to get plants true to name. I received three grafted plants of *M. sieboldii* 'Michiko Renge'. One has shown one single flower, but I won't give in. Lennarth Jonsson told me that multitepalled forms often could produce single flowers with 9 tepals. The early flowers are more often double than flowers produced in late summer.

From Mr. Eisenhut I have obtained *M. sieboldii* 'Semi-Plena'; a plant with leaves more rounded than the species. I have heard that this is a good form with about 18 tepals and with tepals longer than usual.

It is quite disappointing that so few cultivars have been recorded and made available in nurseries which specialize in magnolias. I am trying to collect all double forms in my garden in order to compare and reduce them to a system. If any members can help me, I shall be most grateful. I welcome information about number of tepals, color of stigmas, etc. I would like to thank the persons and institutions making it possible for me to publish this article. ■

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